GHT-WING
ORK BARREL

MARCH 2, 1987 • $1.95

Culture Shock on Capitol Hill

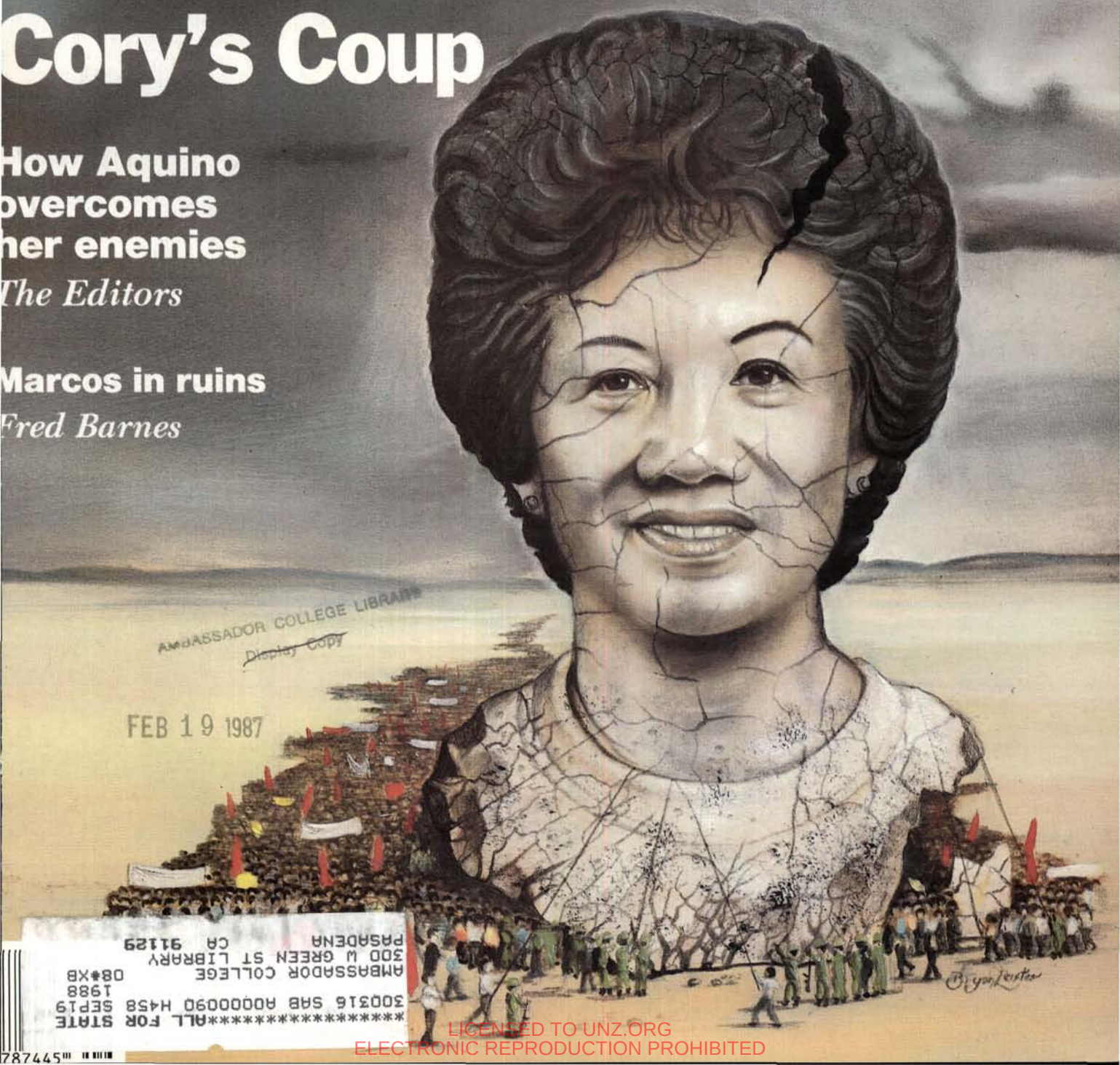
JOSEPH NOCERA: THE IACOCCA CLONES • THE POPE OF MODERNISM • SIMON LEYS: A CHINESE PARABLE

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Cory's Coup

How Aquino overcomes her enemies
The Editors

Marcos in ruins
Fred Barnes



AMBASSADOR COLLEGE LIBRARY
Display Copy
FEB 19 1987
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE 08*XB
300 W GREEN ST LIBRARY
PASADENA CA 91129
*****ALL FOR STATE 300316 SAB A00000090 H458 SEP19 1988
787445

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Toward a more competitive America—I

Let's talk about productivity

In recent months, political leaders, academics and businessmen alike have increasingly discussed the issue of American competitiveness—the ability of the nation's industry and agriculture to compete successfully in world markets. The argument has been strident at times and reasoned at others, but whatever consensus has emerged centers on American productivity—seen in all quarters as the key to the ability to compete.

We welcome a discussion of how America can become more productive, and therefore more competitive. We intend to spell out our own views on the subject in the coming weeks. We will do so in the belief that the topic is so important that all affected segments of society—and that means virtually everybody—have the obligation to contribute to the debate.

What is productivity? It's the relationship of goods and services produced in the economy compared to the resources used to produce them. While this relationship can be measured by economists in several ways, output per labor hour is the measure used most widely. This doesn't necessarily mean the output per hour of a man picking tomatoes or a woman rolling cigars. Productivity is a function of the machinery workers use, and the technology that designs, maintains, and often operates the equipment. So increased productivity doesn't necessarily mean working harder, faster, or longer. More often, in a modern industrial economy, it means working smarter, with better tools. Productivity, in other words, stems from investment in plant, equipment, research, and people.

Increased productivity is absolutely crucial because, in the long run, it is the only way to raise real incomes, remain competitive—and keep inflation in check. Productivity is the key to an expanding economy—a bigger pie that can accommodate the needs of the poor and the disadvantaged.

Since economic expansion is crucial, we must note that the private business sector has been a fantastic engine of productivity and growth. Since 1980, almost 11 million new jobs have been created in the U.S. by the private sector.

This rise in employment is even more dramatic in view of the changing nature of the work force, and the growth in population. The percentage of working-age people counted in the labor force has grown from about 64 percent in 1980 to 65.3 percent last year. The work force today includes about three million people who, traditionally, were not among its ranks—mostly women, and, particularly, younger married women. Given these demographic changes, it is a genuine achievement that between 1980 and 1986 the unemployment level stayed roughly the same, somewhere above 7 percent.

We aren't saying that America is without its problems. Unemployment at seven percent is too high. The manufacturing sector has been weakened. American goods do have trouble competing against foreign products. The farm belt is a disaster area. Too many youthful members of minority groups remain unskilled and unemployed, meaning there's a massive educational task to be undertaken. Many face the prospects of a bleak old age.

Some, in the quest for a quick fix, are urging tariffs and import quotas to keep out foreign goods in an attempt to solve America's problems. But protectionism is no solution. Whenever it has been tried, it has brought retaliation, trade wars, and, ultimately, the loss of jobs. In a global economy, a trade war can have no winners, only losers.

The way for America to solve its problems is not to beggar its neighbors. A growing private business sector, in the long run, remains the best hope for genuine, lasting social progress. We stress the private sector, because government isn't the answer, either. In 1980, federal spending took 22.2 percent of the GNP; in '86 it gobbled up 23.8 percent. But bigger government hasn't made our problems go away. Instead, government spending has exacerbated the budget deficit, and made the problems worse.

Next: Savings = investment = productivity.

Mobil®

© 1987 Mobil Corporation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

FOUNDED 1914 — *A Weekly Journal of Opinion* — ISSUE 3,763

WASHINGTON, D.C. — MARCH 2, 1987

Editor-in-Chief and Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ

Editor
MICHAEL KINSLEY
Literary Editor
LEON WIESELTIER
Senior Editors
FRED BARNES, ANN HULBERT,
MORTON KONDRACKE, CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER
Managing Editor
DOROTHY WICKENDEN
Associate Editors
JEFFERSON MORLEY, CHARLES LANE,
LOUIS MENAND
New Republic Books Editor
(Basic Books)
STEVE WASSERMAN
Films — *Theater*
STANLEY KAUFFMANN — ROBERT BRUSTEIN
Music — *Poetry*
EDWARD ROTHSTEIN — RICHARD HOWARD
Art
MARK STEVENS
Economics Correspondent
ROBERT KUTTNER
Contributing Editors
ROBERT COLES, HENRY FAIRLIE,
JAMES K. GLASSMAN, HENDRIK HERTZBERG,
JOHN KEEGAN, VINT LAWRENCE,
R.W.B. LEWIS, MARK CRISPIN MILLER,
ROBERT B. REICH, MAGGIE SCARF,
RONALD STEEL, RICHARD L. STROUT,
E. V. THAW, ANNE TYLER,
NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN, MICHAEL WALZER,
C. VANN WOODWARD
West Coast Correspondent
MICKEY KAUS
Editorial-Corporate Coordinator
LAURA E. OBOLENSKY
Assistant to the Editors
ELISABETH BRANDNER
Production Manager
BRUCE STEINKE
Copy Editor
LEONA HIRAOKA ROTH
Assistant Literary Editor
JENNIFER KRAUSS
Production Associate
KAREN A. WATKINS
Reporter-Researchers
CROCKER COULSON, SARAH HELMSTADTER,
JEFFREY L. PASLEY, ADAM PAUL WEISMAN

President and Publisher
JEFFREY L. DEARTH
Associate Publisher
JOAN M. STAPLETON
Circulation Director
TOM HICKS
Controller
JEAN GANDY
Advertising Manager
JENNIFER BARRETT
Circulation Manager
PATTY JONES
Accounting Manager
MARIA F. SALATTI
Circulation Assistant
KRISTIN CONRADI
Advertising Assistant
DARLENE BUSCAGLIO
Accounting Assistant
CHRISTINA R. OVERHOLSER
Back Issues and Reception
JENNIFER WILLIAMS
Corporate Marketing
GUY STODDARD
Leadership Network Advertising
ROBERT F. SENNOTT JR.

4 **TRB FROM WASHINGTON** ..... MADCAP MIK
Gorbachev's reforms in the post-Reagan era.

6 **CORRESPONDENCE** ..... Pat Buchanan's past, anti-anti-Communists, &c.

7 **THE EDITORS** ..... CORY HALLELUJAH
Can Aquino's political prowess and commitment to democracy revolutionize the Philippines?
NOTEBOOK
Gerald Ford and Iranamok &c.

9 **FRED BARNES** ..... WHITE HOUSE WATCH: MARCOS AT BAY
Reagan dumps his old buddy.

10 **CHARLES PAUL FREUND** ..... THE ZEITGEIST CHECKLIST

11 **WILLIAM SALETAN** ..... POSTCARD HOUSTON: SONS OF GUNS
Texans' love affair with firearms.

13 **SIMON LEYS** ..... CHINA'S NEW MATH
A parable about the student unrest.

13 **CLARENCE PAGE** ..... SPOILS AND SPOILERS
Chicago's Mayor Washington turns the tables on his tormentors.

15 **DAVID PRYCE-JONES** ..... FOUL PLAY
The curtain falls on Jim Allen's 'Perdition.'

17 **WALTER LAQUEUR** ..... KOHL ON A ROLL
Germany's premier holds off the left.
Can Thatcher follow suit?

18 **CROCKER COULSON** ..... A TASTE FOR PORK
Conservatives feed at the public trough.

21 **CHRISTOPHER J. MATTHEWS** ... ON THE HILL: THE OLD BREED STRIKES BACK
Les Aspin and the Watergate babies get their comeuppance from the boys in the steam room.

24 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ..... ON FILMS: WOMEN IN PAIRS
Three female buddy pictures.

26 **JED PERL** ..... POSITIVELY EIGHTH STREET
The Collected Essays and Criticism: Perceptions and Judgments, 1939-1944 by Clement Greenberg
The Collected Essays and Criticism: Arrogant Purpose, 1945-1949 by Clement Greenberg

32 **JOSEPH NOCERA** ..... IACOCC-HEADS
Taking care of business books.

36 **JUDITH N. SHKLAR** ..... ONE DOUBTS, THE OTHER DOESN'T
Voltaire by A. J. Ayer
Rousseau and the Republic of Virtue by Carol Blum

38 **MARK STRAND** ..... POEM *Grete Samsa's Letter To H.*

40 **MARY JO SALTER** ..... OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
Emily Dickinson by Cynthia Griffin Wolff

42 **SALT LAKE CITY DIARIST** ..... THIS IS THE PLACE

COVER by Bryan Leister for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Articles on pages 7 and 9.

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 196, Number 9, Issue 3,763, March 2, 1987. (Printed on February 11, 1987.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 5 & 12, July 13 & 20, Aug. 10 & 17, and Sept. 14 & 21, 1987) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. Leadership Network advertising (212) 684-5500. Yearly subscriptions, $56; foreign, $81; Canada, $70. Back issues, $2.50 (includes postage & handling).

©1986 by The New Republic, Inc.

(ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Available on microfilm from University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and Bell & Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, OH 44691. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. **Subscribers:** Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to **Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 56515, Boulder, CO 80322.** For subscription problems call **800-525-0643.**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRB®

FROM WASHINGTON

MADCAP MIK

TRB is on vacation. This column was written by Hendrik Hertzberg.

What's really going on in the Soviet Union? That depends—what paper do you read?

"Scowling Commie boss Mikhail Gorbachev," reports the February 17 *Weekly World News* (circulation one million, price 55 cents, available at selected supermarket checkout counters), "is a sober, strait-laced, no-nonsense kind of guy when he's plotting revolutions or posing for the TV cameras in Red Square. But behind closed doors, madcap Mik is a pizza-gobbling, guitar-strumming rock 'n' roll freak who spends hours imitating Bruce Springsteen—and longs to make pretty music with rainbow-haired rocker Cyndi Lauper!"

For another view, here's a front-page flash from a recent issue of *Pravda* (circulation 8 million, price four kopeks, available at selected kolkhoz commissaries):

"On December 24, a meeting was held in the CPSU Central Committee with leaders of union ministries and republics. CPSU Central Committee General Secretary M. S. Gorbachev stressed that the decisions and ideas of the party more and more fully occupy the minds of our personnel and labor collectives," blah blah blah zzzz.

As always, it's safe to say that the truth lies somewhere in between. Russia is not about to become America, or even Amerika. The unimaginable weight of the Party and state dictatorship is as much the defining reality of Soviet life as it ever was. Yet now the man who sits atop that great weight finds it irksome. He may not be ready to enter any air guitar contests, but the things he has said and done and permitted are beginning to add up.

When the Soviet government and press treated last year's nuclear accident at Chernobyl with something approaching frankness, it was so freakish as to be almost as newsworthy as the meltdown itself. Russian readers have since become accustomed to stories about Aeroflot plane crashes and political street riots in provincial capitals. The editorials are as mind-numbing as ever, but now there is the odd op-ed piece.

A few weeks ago, for example, *Pravda*, under the headline "What People In The West Think," ran a collection of statements on arms control by a half-dozen American and European observers, including Paul Warnke, President Carter's arms negotiator. All were critical of both the Soviet and the American positions; but in *Pravda*, the plague-on-both-our-houses approach must be counted a plus. Warnke even threw in a condemnation of Moscow for the war in Afghanistan. *Pravda*'s editors, of course, added a defensive "Afterword" telling readers what to think—e.g., that "the undeclared war against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan is primarily Washington's doing." And published criticisms of Soviet foreign policy will be more impressive when the headline reads "What People In The East Think." Still, it's something.

The freeing of Andrei Sakharov from internal exile is something, too. So is the release of hundreds of political prisoners. So is the unmolested street demonstration, just last week, demanding more such releases. So is the call (in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*) for the publication of Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago.* So is the defeat of a hack by a troublemaking artist for the chairmanship of the movie directors' union. All this may be cheap propaganda, as some in the Reagan administration believe. If it is, then the role of cheap propaganda as an engine of historical progress has been underestimated.

Gorbachev's now-famous January 27 speech—the one that upstaged Reagan's wet-noodle State of the Union—called for elections by secret ballot, and with more than one candidate per post, of party officials and workplace managers. "If realized," the émigré journalist Alexander Amerisov writes exuberantly in the current issue of his informative newsletter, *Soviet-American Review*, "Gorbachev's proposals would start an irreversible process of transformation of the Soviet Union from one of the most repressive countries in the world to one of the most, if not the most, democratic." Andrei Sakharov's more measured assessment, in an interview with Bill Keller of the *New York Times*, is that "something real is happening."

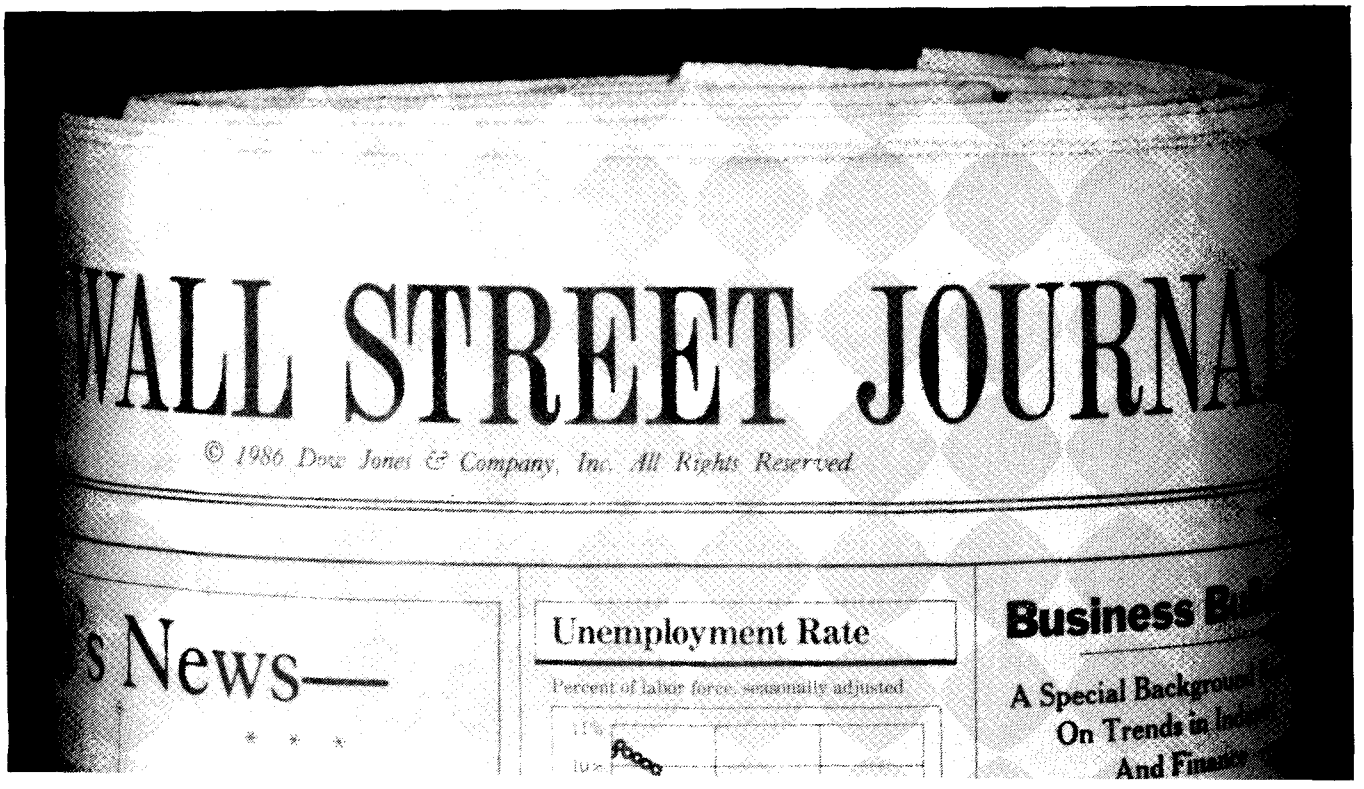
From all accounts, the radical political changes Gorbachev says he wants are being blocked by the state and Party apparat—a perverse consequence of the Soviet Union's "positive" evolution from arbitrary one-man rule to bureaucratic authoritarianism. But even if the changes do not come, there is something immensely salubrious in the fact that a Soviet leader is using words to mean more or less what they say. Here is Gorbachev pointedly defining democracy as a system in which people vote by secret ballot among a choice of candidates—just as if the Soviet state had not spent the past 70 years insisting that democracy consists of voting unanimously for a single candidate chosen from above. The "new" definition is of course incomplete, but at least it is not the polar opposite of the truth. Soviet authoritarianism is very much alive, but the Soviet dream/nightmare of a total Newspeak state in which the very name of freedom has been abolished, that is stone dead.

Also stone dead, by the way, is the Evil Empire, or Great Satan, explanation of Soviet reality. Possibly it had some temporary utility as an antibody to the "moral equivalence" infection, the virulence of which, however, was always grossly exaggerated by conservative and neoconservative publicists. In any case it was never a helpful guide to policy. An interesting convergence of events is taking shape: not just Gorbachev and his reformist ambitions, but also the semi-stalemate in Afghanistan, the global weariness with Cold War II, the fiscal pressures of bloated defense budgets, the imminent collapse of the *contra* fantasy in Nicaragua, the inadvertent (on Reagan's part) broadening of the possibilities for arms control at Reykjavik, the emergence of forces (such as Islamic fundamentalism) that are dangerous without being Communist, and, of course, the beaching of the great Reagan whale and its ideological pilot fish. We may not get Soviet democracy, but if Gorbachev hangs on and anybody except Jack Kemp is elected president in 1988 we are likely to get a détente that will make the last one look like *Top Gun*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GREAT INTRODUCTORY OFFER!

Just $29.75 brings you The Wall Street Journal for 13 weeks.



Subscribe now to The Wall Street Journal and every business day you'll get the facts and ideas which could make you—and your company—more successful.

We'll tell you the products that are selling, where new markets are, the executives on the rise, and what your competitors are up to. You'll find out how companies like yours and people like yourself are solving problems and developing management techniques that work.

Manage your personal finances better with The Journal.

Every issue contains the column, *Your Money Matters,* with helpful information on every aspect of personal finance—stocks, bonds, money markets, tax shelters, commodities, IRS regulations, and more.

Introductory subscription offer.

If your goal is greater success for your company and yourself, The Wall Street Journal can get you off to a running start every business day. Subscribe now and take advantage of The Journal's introductory subscription offer—13 weeks for just $29.75. Complete and mail the coupon today!

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
THE NEW REPUBLIC
1220 19th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036

☐ Introductory offer! Send me 13 weeks of The Journal for $29.75.
☐ I prefer a six-month subscription (26 weeks) for $59.50.
☐ Check enclosed *(payable to The Wall Street Journal).*
☐ Bill me.
☐ Please charge my:
☐ American Express ☐ Diners Club ☐ MC ☐ VISA

Card # _____ Expires_____

Signature_____

Name (please print)_____

Address_____ Suite/Apt._____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Limited time offer—good in continental U.S. only. 3XYG

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

BUCHANAN VIGIL

To the editors:

Your cover story on Patrick J. Buchanan ("White House Vigilante" by John Judis, January 26) noted that "Buchanan may also represent a new kind of national politics . . . contemptuous of black leaders, whether in the United States or South Africa; openly hostile to black demands to redress historic grievances . . . and, above all, in search of a strong leader—a new Theodore Roosevelt." This identification of our 26th president with the policies of Pat Buchanan is ludicrous. The idea that today's conservatives are searching for "a new Theodore Roosevelt" is preposterous.

Roosevelt spent seven years in the White House giving conservatives apoplexy. He scorned monopolists as "malefactors of great wealth," to become the fabled "Trust-buster." He appointed the first Jewish Cabinet member in history. He set aside 150 million acres of timberland for the public. In 1910, after leaving office, T. R. called for a "New Nationalism" program of social justice and public welfare, including a graduated income tax, workmen's compensation, and child labor laws. And only one month after becoming president, he entertained Booker T. Washington at the White House—which outraged Southern whites. The event was depicted on a T. R. campaign button proclaiming "Equality."

DON D. WRIGHT
Seattle, Washington

To the editors:

Although I applaud John Judis's incisive portrait of Patrick Buchanan, I must correct one glaring inaccuracy in his report. Judis states that there is no evidence that Buchanan holds a personal animus against any group other than "liberals, Communists, and the editors of the *Washington Post*." Judis has neglected to mention here Buchanan's remarks about the homosexual minority. In 1983, in his syndicated column, Buchanan explained his understanding of the AIDS tragedy: "homosexuals have declared war upon nature, and now nature has exacted an awful retribution." Further, he has endorsed violation of the federal Rehabilitation Act in suggesting that gay people be barred altogether from the "food-handling business."

Such remarks are clear evidence either of Mr. Buchanan's ignorance or hate. One suspects that hate must be the cause, since Judis has provided ample and unfortunate evidence that the man isn't stupid.

MARK BARNES
New York, New York

THE ANTI-ANTI-COMMUNISTS

To the editors:

Theodore Draper's essay ("The Class Struggle," January 26) on one of the recent attempts to romanticize and rehabilitate the academic supporters of the American Communist Party addresses a phenomenon that goes beyond scholarly salvage operations. The attitudes displayed by Ellen W. Schrecker in *No Ivory Tower* have become firmly entrenched and widespread. Why has anti-anti-communism (AAC) remained such a deeply held article of faith, while anti-communism, as Draper puts it, "a mortal sin which cannot be forgiven"?

AAC and the adversary culture have been inextricably interwoven. AAC became most demonstratively embraced in the 1960s. The protest against American involvement in the war gradually shaded into the endorsement of Communist North Vietnam. The '60s also boosted AAC by reviving, with modifications, the popular front and no-enemy-on-the-left mentality, especially when the enemy produced critiques of American society virtually identical to those of the indigenous critics. (More recently, the peace movement has become hospitable to these attitudes.) Yet even taking into account these historical factors, why do so many who do not support Communist movements find it so embarrassing, painful, or utterly impossible to go on record as being anti-Communist?

AAC may best be explained as a by-product of alienation that has become the readily assumed stance of many American intellectuals. Anti-Communists tend to take a more positive view of American society as compared to Communist ones, and find it difficult to be critical of Communist systems without having some appreciation of pluralistic societies such as the United States. Thus anti-communism can and does divert attention from the critique of America—which AACs find most galling.

The "romance of American communism" (the title of a 1970s book) will be with us as long as enough intellectuals remain unwilling to come to grips with the connection between their loathing for American society and the benefit of doubt they give to Communist movements and countries, past or present.

PAUL HOLLANDER
Professor of Sociology
University of Massachusetts at Amherst
Amherst, Massachusetts

NON-PACIFIST DOVES

To the editors:

In "Aspin's Scalp" (February 2) you describe the defense policy of the Democratic Party as "hostage to the party's pacifist wing." You are confusing pacifism with arms control. I defy you to name one Democratic representative or senator who espouses pacifism (defined in my dictionary as refusal to bear arms on moral or religious grounds) or to name one pacifist group with significant influence in the Democratic Party.

Do you mean to imply that those Democrats who believe that the superpowers are vastly overarmed with nuclear weapons and that the military budget is unaffordable and wasteful are unwilling to defend their country militarily? Nothing could be further from the truth.

JEROME GROSSMAN
President, Council for a Livable World
Boston, Massachusetts

The editors reply:

We meant to say "the party's isolationist wing."

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

To the editors:

Your Washington Diarist ("Living in a Metaphor," January 26) shows an admirable interest in District of Columbia place-names, but when he says "only MacArthur, among 20th-century generals, has a significant street named for him," he is only barely right. General Arthur MacArthur, the hero of the Philippines, was a largely 19th-century figure, winning his Medal of Honor on a hillside in Tennessee during the Civil War. Still, he did defeat Aguinaldo after 1900, have a boulevard in Washington named after him, and live until 1912.

Surely Charles Paul Freund was not confusing him with his son Douglas?

CHARLES THARP
Chevy Chase, Maryland

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC
MARCH 2, 1987

CORY HALLELUJAH

As much as we cheered when Corazon Aquino replaced Ferdinand Marcos as president of the Philippines a year ago, we also worried. It looked as though a political naif, albeit a determined and well-meaning one, had gone swimming with the barracudas. If she weren't eaten alive by her ambitious allies, including Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Vice President Salvador Laurel, she would still have her enemies chasing her, including Marcos and Company, power-hungry elements of the military, and, ultimately, the Communist New People's Army. Some right-wingers in the United States, harboring little faith in democracy or in Aquino herself, tagged her "Cory Kerensky," anticipating that the respite between despotism and Bolshevism might be as short-lived in the Philippines as it was in Russia in 1917. Even those with maximum hope for democracy had to fear that she would be overthrown by the right, opening the way for an eventual Communist victory. And there was at least a theoretical possibility that challenges from her enemies and other difficulties in governing would cause her to delay the transition to democracy, and perhaps even forgo it.

A year later, there is still much to worry about, but there is even more reason to cheer and be gratified anew. Corazon Aquino is proving to be a gifted and gritty political leader. She has survived any number of plots and coup attempts, and by giving Enrile and Marcos enough rope to strangle themselves, she has succeeded in neutralizing them both. Enrile tried to oust her or scare her into becoming a mere figurehead, giving her the opportunity to fire him, which she did deftly as part of a larger Cabinet housecleaning. Then Enrile campaigned against the new constitution (which guarantees her five more years in office) and was devastated in the February 2 plebiscite. Aquino, hoping for 65 percent approval, received 76 percent support from the population. At last Enrile has accepted her presidency.

Marcos has been more than neutralized. Failing in two comic-opera putsch attempts, he has been humiliated. The military remains restive—40 percent apparently voted against Aquino in the plebiscite—but it is well-led by Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos and the new defense minister, Rafael Ileto, who have kept it loyal to the government and have begun reforming, retraining, and re-equipping it for combat against the Communists.

Military officers detested Aquino's decisions to order it into a defensive posture against the NPA and then to agree to a 60-day cease-fire and negotiations with the Communists. But those seem to have been wise actions. During the stand-down, the army has had time to regroup, and the Philippine public has been made aware of the realities of Communist rule in the countryside where NPA "taxation" means extortion and "revolutionary justice" means murder. The Communists have now taken the onus of breaking off negotiations and renouncing the cease-fire. Along with Marcos and Enrile, the Communists urged "No" votes on the constitution, and were repudiated even in territories where NPA influence supposedly is strong. When the fighting resumes, Aquino will start on moral high ground.

Aquino has made progress on the economy. After three years of contraction, the economy actually grew slightly last year. This year economic growth should reach two or three percent. The outflow of capital has stopped, inflation is under control, taxes have been cut to entice new investment, loan packages have been negotiated with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the monop-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

olies owned by Marcos cronies have been broken up, and trade barriers designed to protect powerful business interests have begun to be lowered.

SALUTARY AS ALL this is, democracy in the Philippines is still in grave danger. The NPA may have lost prestige as a result of the cease-fire and the election, but it still has assets—military strength and underlying conditions of poverty, corruption, and inequitable distribution of wealth. To beat the Communists, the government is going to have to combine military skill with social reform, and it's not yet evident that it is equipped to do so. To implement vital programs such as land reform and economic development, Aquino is going to have to exercise firm control over both the new Congress authorized under the constitution and the thousands of officials who actually manage things at the local level.

"The first thing she's got to do is govern," says Frederick Z. Brown, a former Republican staffer on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. "What the Philippines needs is something like the first year of the New Deal, when FDR put his stamp on the government." Brown and other U.S. experts think Aquino must form her own political party before congressional elections this May and local elections in August to get *her* people in control of the Senate and House (where Enrile apparently is hoping to be speaker). Then she must see to it that her programs aren't bogged down in endless quarreling among politicians and interest groups.

According to Brown, land reform has to consist of more than distribution of farm plots to the peasantry, though many Americans think Aquino should begin that process by breaking up her own family's 15,000-acre sugar-growing estate, Hacienda Luisita. He says the Philippines needs full-scale rural reform, which would include diversion of land from unprofitable sugar growing to farming of fish and vegetables for export, training of new farm owners in agricultural techniques, and creation of non-farm job opportunities for rural residents.

According to U.S. Ambassador Stephen Bosworth, the most crucial question in the Philippine future is whether the economy will grow enough to provide a better standard of living for people. That, he says, depends on whether the government fully implements its declared policies of deregulation, free trade, and privatization, many of which will be resisted by entrenched interests. Politically, Aquino can't let local government fall back into the hands of corrupt Marcos-era bosses, or the NPA will be the beneficiary.

On the military level, American officials say that the growth of NPA strength slowed last year, but did not diminish. The Pentagon estimates that the NPA has 23,500 fighters now, compared to 22,000 a year ago and 18,500 in early 1985, and that of the country's 41,000 hamlets, between 17 percent and 20 percent are under NPA influence or full control, compared to some 15 percent last year and ten percent the year before.

Contrary to the conventional wisdom in Manila and Washington that NPA morale is low, reports from rebel-help areas—especially one by Mark Fineman in the February 10 *Los Angeles Times*—indicate that the guerrillas think they made good use of the cease-fire period for retraining, recruitment, and spreading the propaganda message that Aquino can't really change things in the country. U.S. officials say that fewer than 500 NPA fighters turned themselves in during the cease-fire. For the first time, according to Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Armitage, there are indications that the NPA has begun talking with foreign Communists—North Korea and Vietnam—about getting weapons aid.

Armitage says that Defense Minister Ileto, a former ambassador to Thailand and a close student of its successful counterinsurgency campaign, is aware of the basic elements of guerrilla warfare, but other Americans question whether his plans are ready for implementation or whether the Philippine army is yet trained and equipped for effective combat against the NPA. Only nine Philippine army battalions out of 44 have been retrained in counterinsurgency technique—that is, in fighting enemies, but respecting civilians—so it's clear that the government will not be able to mount nationwide operations against the Communists right away, but will have to pick its targets.

ONE OF Cory Aquino's advantages is that she faces her adversaries with a united American government behind her. The Reagan administration has backed her fully, and the Democratic Congress last year went the administration one better by adding $200 million to its foreign aid request. The United States is scheduled to provide $323.7 million this year in economic aid, plus $52.6 million in military aid, to which the administration wants to add $50 million in a supplemental appropriation. The administration and the Philippine government currently are in disagreement about how Congress's extra $200 million should be allocated. The Philippines (and most Democrats) wants the money in the form of a general grant, to be used to pay ordinary government bills, while the administration prefers to focus on specific projects that it believes will advance economic and social reform. In principle, we are inclined to trust President Aquino and her advisers to know how to spend extra money; if evidence of misuse arises, the United States can change policy.

Because of the need to balance the U.S. budget, the administration is recommending a substantial cut in aid for the next fiscal year—down to $148.2 million, plus $112.6 million for military aid. We trust that Congress will increase that amount to whatever is adequate to finance land reform and other Philippine development projects, and give the Philippine military what it needs to defeat the NPA. Aquino has succeeded in winning her political battles in Manila. She has shown great popularity among people in the provinces. Now, however, she must deliver programs to them that offer hope for a better future, and install leaders who offer them the assurance of justice. The United States has a great stake in her success, spiritually and geopolitically. What it costs to help her, we ought to pay. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTEBOOK

□ PARDON THE SCANDAL: Historians looking to explain the roots of the Iranamok scandal might go back to September 1974, when President Ford pardoned former President Nixon for all of his actions during Watergate. The natural course of the criminal justice system—to pursue wrongdoers whomever they may be—was thwarted. At the time, the conventional wisdom in Washington held that the sight of a former president in the dock would have been a national humiliation. Indeed, it might have been. But the sight might have also seared into the national consciousness the idea that high government officials are not beyond the law. The memory of a former president facing a jury of his peers would have lasted well into the Reagan administration. In particular, it might have helped stay the hand of those officials eager to conduct their own secret policies around the world in defiance of Congress and the law.

□ TELL ME A STORY: Iranamok has ignited a prevarication boom in Washington, an outpouring of creative misrepresentation unmatched since Watergate. We recently devoted special attention to Oliver North's numerous falsehoods (see "Inside Ollie's Mind" by Eric Alterman, February 16), but in the avalanche of scandal revelations numerous other Reagan administration fibs have gone unappreciated. In an effort to give such tall tales (and their authors) the attention they deserve, we will periodically cite outstanding examples of Iranamok dissembling. For example, you may have missed the $10 million howler that Elliott Abrams, the assistant secretary of state, told last December. Abrams informed the Senate Intelligence Committee that he had solicited an Arab oil sheikh to give $10 million to the *contra* rebels in Nicaragua. He explained—under oath—that the donation went for "humanitarian" aid to the *contras*. In late January the Intelligence Committee concluded that Abrams had made no effort to ensure the money was used for humanitarian purposes. Abrams then apologized for giving testimony that "clearly left a misleading impression." Abrams's whopper meets the highest standards of Iranamok fiction not only because of its creativity but also its audacity: Abrams now says he has no idea where the $10 million went.

□ VIOLINS, PLEASE: Consider the tragic plight of one Washington family. The father is lucky enough to have a job. But his wife (gasp) has to take a job to help pay the bills. The daughter (sob) has to work to pay for college. The son (wailing and gnashing of teeth) "had the worst-quality violin in his summer camp orchestra." Such are the hardships endured by Paul Henry, a Republican representative from Michigan who earns $77,400 a year. He told the *Washington Post* that he won't vote for a congressional pay raise, "until the public is educated for it."

□ CLARIFICATION: We regret that an article in last week's NEW REPUBLIC, "Inside Dopes," erroneously suggested that Suzanne Garment left her job as a *Wall Street Journal* Washington columnist because "her employers may have been disturbed by a conflict of interest in her columns on Iranamok. Her husband, Leonard Garment, is a lawyer for Robert McFarlane. . ." Our article cited a *Washington Post* article as the source. What the *Post* actually said was that one *Journal* employee had speculated that a conflict of interest had been the reason for her departure. The *Post* also quoted the *Journal*'s editorial page editor, Robert Bartley, as denying that Garment's leaving had anything to do with the Iran-*contra* controversy. We should have quoted Bartley's denial.

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

MARCOS AT BAY

FERDINAND MARCOS had a good thing going with President Reagan. The former president of the Philippines is passionately anti-communist, and there aren't many traits in a leader, even a fallen leader, that Reagan admires more. Reagan also thinks the fellow got a slightly raw deal when he was ushered out of Malacanang Palace a year ago by Reagan's own administration and flown to safe haven in Hawaii. He still believes that there was vote fraud on both sides—Marcos's and Cory Aquino's—in last year's election. Once Marcos got to the United States, word was passed from the White House: Reagan likes the guy, so let's be gracious to him.

The friendship has long since chilled, at least on Reagan's side. Last April 27 Reagan stopped in Hawaii on his way to the Far East, where he was to confer with the president of Indonesia and attend an economic summit of the industrial democracies. He was housed a mile from the Marcos residence in Honolulu. Rather than ignore Marcos, Reagan arranged to make a courtesy telephone call. Marcos was ready. He invited television cameras to his house to record this evidence of his close tie with Reagan. The call lasted 30 minutes, much of it between Imelda Marcos and Nancy Reagan. Imelda sobbed uncontrollably, and all this was shown on television. State Department officials were appalled. Reagan too was put off by "the way Marcos comported himself, videotaping the call, making a scene," one official said. More important, Nancy Reagan felt exploited. She was angry over the incident. Ever since, the Reagans have given the Marcoses the cold shoulder.

The Aquino factor also pulled Reagan away from Marcos. True, the administration has a geopolitical incentive in treating Marcos with warm deference. If he's harassed or scorned, that might discourage other dictators—General

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Pinochet in Chile, say—from accepting exile here when threatened by democratic forces. But this is overshadowed by the desire, from Reagan on down, to demonstrate unwavering support for President Aquino. Some officials, notably at the Pentagon, were skeptical of her when she took power, fearing she'd let the Communist insurrection mushroom. Now they are Aquino enthusiasts, minimizing her failures and lauding her successes. "By golly, she's done pretty well with people power," says Richard L. Armitage, the assistant defense secretary for international security affairs.

Still, "cobwebs of doubt" (the phrase used by Philippine vice president Doy Laurel) about Reagan's personal leanings lingered for months. Marcos had asserted for years that though the State Department criticized him, Reagan was a fan. Not surprisingly, some Aquino aides figured Reagan remained a closet Marcos backer. Their view changed when Reagan met with Aquino in the Oval Office last September. The meeting was set for ten minutes, with an expanded session with aides to follow in the Cabinet Room. While the underlings waited anxiously, Reagan prolonged the private session for more than an hour, swapping anecdotes with Aquino. The Reagan charm worked. At a luncheon afterward, he told jokes. "Mr. President, we used to have a lot of jokes, too," said Ramon Mitra, Aquino's agriculture minister. "But we can't tell them anymore. They're anti-government jokes." Reagan howled.

To prove its sincerity, the administration has adopted the policy of catering to Aquino's desire to keep Marcos in the United States, where Filipinos can keep an eye on him and he can be served subpoenas. She and her advisers "feel the arm of the law can always find him in Hawaii," says an administration official. Indeed, it has. He's been sued nearly a dozen times, and the Justice Department has summoned him and Imelda to testify before a grand jury in Alexandria, Virginia, investigating misuse of American military aid.

Technically, Marcos is free to leave the United States. But before accepting Marcos, countries invariably check

THE ZEITGEIST CHECKLIST

BY CHARLES PAUL FREUND

This Week		Last Week	Weeks on Chart
1.	WOLF!	2	3
2.	MINISTRY OF TRUTH	3	15
3.	HARD DRUG FACTS	—	1
4.	SICKNESS UNTO DEATH	*	7
5.	START YOUR DAY OFF RIGHT	—	1
6.	SHIFTING TIDE OF BATTLE	*	3
7.	OVERTAXED	—	1
8.	RACE IS TO THE SWIFT	*	4
9.	CARE NOW, PAY LATER	4	6
10.	A DINK BY ANY OTHER NAME	—	1

1. WOLF!

Hostages. The U.S.'s Mideast military maneuverings seem to signal that, this time, we *mean* that we're taking a hard line—really. As for the unhappy hostages, the attitude of the ever more helpless Americans seems to have become, have they been shot yet?

2. MINISTRY OF TRUTH

Iranamok. It's unfair to have criticized the administration for being bamboozled by so-called Iranian moderates; it *knew* they were radicals. There is now nothing left of the original Reagan line on the deal, except for Reagan's "explanation" that your radicals are his moderates. Meanwhile, on the fringe, there are reports of three murders purportedly related to the Iran-*contra* connection. This'll become a Who-Shot-JFK story yet.

3. HARD DRUG FACTS

Lehder. Carlos Lehder's arrest is bringing out hard coverage of drugs that was largely missing during last summer's Drug Bubble: Who exactly is responsible for most of the drugs here? Lehder and his colleagues haven't become semiglamorous Al Capones here because it would (and has) cost journalists their lives to cover them.

4. SICKNESS UNTO DEATH

AIDS. Forget Liberace. Hell, forget condoms on TV; condoms are turning up *in churches.* The real development in AIDS is in Europe, where there have now been murder-suicides out of *fear* of the disease. This is psychosis, and some papers in Italy have begun a public self-examination of their coverage.

5. START YOUR DAY OFF RIGHT

Democrats. Bentsen's $10,000 breakfasts (now rescinded), and the sleazy way the pay raise was handled, have added a black eye to the Democrats' proud, new, high-ground profile, and this just after trouncing Reagan on the water bill and showing some muscle.

6. SHIFTING TIDE OF BATTLE

Platoon cum Vietnam. The *Platoon* phenomenon is big enough and strong enough to occasion re-examinations not only of the war, but of the post-Vietnam reaction to it. The memorial in D.C. is now seen as a turning point, making it possible to discuss the war.

7. OVERTAXED

The W-4 form. The silly smirk on the American taxpayer's face derives from the government's admission that its new, improved W-4 form is incomprehensible, and features a major omission. It is such a mess that the IRS may have to forgo penalties. Who says there's no good news?

8. RACE IS TO THE SWIFT

Race relations. Racial issues are surfacing in the Chicago mayoral primary campaign, Oprah Winfrey has broadcast live from Klan country, and campus problems in New England have been assigned to race. Since these problems have never gone away, a reasonable question is why the low profile for so long? Perhaps the We're-Number-One outlook couldn't accommodate it.

9. CARE NOW, PAY LATER

Compassion meets credit. Health care for the elderly is getting page one attention, but the real sign of compassion's cultural strength is that somebody's found a way to cash in. Non-profit environmental, feminist, and other cause groups have made common cause with credit card firms; consume and the Sierra Club, or whoever, gets a 2.5 percent cut.

10. A DINK BY ANY OTHER NAME

Language. Hippies, yippies, yuppies, buppies; Americans seem happiest when they've created cute neologisms for the phenomena around them. The latest such concept-handle is "DINK," an acronym for "Double Income, No Kids" households. The only such words that stick, though, are those that people give themselves as badges, or those they use as insults. DINK may have some hope as the latter.

*Item resurfaces in the Zeitgeist after at least one week's absence.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with the Aquino government and are told to spurn him. A dozen countries have. And since Aquino won't let him come back to the Philippines, he's stuck. "If he wants to go to L.A., fine," says Armitage. "If he wants to go to Washington, great. But the Philippines, no."

Does Aquino really have anything to fear from Marcos? Not much. Half the Philippine army is from Ilocos Norte, Marcos's home province, and Filipinos are notoriously clannish. But administration officials are convinced that Marcos's appeal is gone. He can create disturbances, but not a coup. This is not the view of the Aquino crowd. "They make Marcos ten feet tall," complains an administration official. "He's five-foot-six, and getting smaller all the time. . . . He may have been a foil they needed, but they don't need him anymore." However, if Aquino wants to treat him as an imminent threat, the administration is willing to play along. And if Marcos fumes, so be it.

Marcos is fuming. In recent months, he has sent several letters to Reagan, only to have them answered orally and in person by Carl Taylor, the State Department's envoy to Marcos. Until a few months ago, Marcos thought Taylor was a direct link to Reagan. Now he knows better and is furious at being forced to deal with minions. Marcos claims that he was brought to Hawaii against his wishes and that administration officials are intervening in Philippine affairs by preventing him from returning. But he has not lost his faith in Reagan. Should an aide or family member disparage Reagan, Marcos upbraids them harshly. Reagan, he says, is a good man and an anticommunist.

HE DESPISES everyone else in the administration, a feeling he made clear to Taylor on January 28. That was the day Taylor informed Marcos he'd better not try to fly to the Philippines. (Taylor had delivered the same message twice before.) Taylor, after being kept waiting at the Marcos residence for 45 minutes, handed Marcos an unsigned document that said, "An attempt to return to the Philippines without the approval of the government of the Philippines would violate the conditions under which you are here as a guest." Further, if Marcos went to the airport, he wouldn't be allowed to leave, and if he wanted to avoid embarrassment, he should stay put. Finally, the document said Taylor was conveying this "on instructions from the highest levels of the U.S. government."

Marcos argued back, according to Marcos sources. "Is this the way you're treating a distinguished foreign visitor?" he demanded. "I don't like the idea of me, the legitimate head of the government of the Republic of the Philippines, being treated as if I am just another clerk that you can dispose of with verbal messages and whose formal request [to go to his sister's funeral in the Philippines] is disregarded with a casual pass of the hands or a casual word." Marcos also suggested that officials were trying to kill him by requiring grand jury testimony in Virginia. "I'm supposed to go to that snowstorm area, where I'll probably die from the cold anyway," he said.

Marcos was right about one thing. The "highest" authorities were not responsible for blocking his departure. When Gaston Sigur, the assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern affairs, was informed at 7:30 p.m. on January 28 that Marcos might soon be heading home, he put together a conference call of officials at the State Department, the Pentagon, the Justice Department, and the National Security Council. There wasn't a peep of dissent over what to do: stop Marcos. The only disagreement came from one official who said Marcos didn't really want to leave, but had purposely drawn attention to his possible departure so he could blame American officials and not his own faintheartedness for continued exile. Reagan wasn't told of the plan until it was being implemented. He could have halted it, but didn't. Asked when Reagan stopped concerning himself with Marcos, an aide said, "Long ago."

FRED BARNES

POSTCARD HOUSTON

SONS OF GUNS

THE NEW YEAR started out with a bang in Houston. Several bangs, in fact. On January 9 police charged 15-year-old Rick Vitek in the shooting deaths of his parents at their home in northwest Harris County. Investigators found the murder weapon, a .22-caliber, bolt-action rifle, in a pond several miles from the Vitek home. The Viteks had given Rick the rifle for Christmas two years ago.

Meanwhile, across town, 15-year-old Lamont Roberts was being held in the January 3 slaying of his father. Lamont's mother told police her husband had been abusing the family for some time. Eventually, Lamont settled the matter with a blast from his father's shotgun. Lamont didn't think the blast would kill his dad. It did.

Both stories made front-page headlines. The January 10 *Houston Chronicle* ran the stories side-by-side in the soap-opera format that sells so well in local news markets these days. Why had two Houston boys shot their parents? Reporters indulged in detailed psychiatric investigations, leaving no aspect of either family's internal strife unexploited. But one easy—and important—partial answer was overlooked. Why did Vitek and Roberts shoot their parents? Because they had guns.

Guns are a given in this part of the country. In 1981 John Hinckley bought a gun in a Dallas pawn shop and used it to shoot President Reagan and four other people in Washington. Two years ago, Odessa, a medium-sized city in west Texas, boasted the highest handgun homicide rate in the country and was known as the murder capital of America. Meanwhile, here in Houston, Chamber of Commerce Pres-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ident Louie Welch, running for mayor last year, announced (into what he thought was a dead microphone) a plan to "shoot the queers." Welch lost the race to incumbent Kathy Whitmire. In January Whitmire's father was charged with reckless conduct after two people who had been living in his house claimed he had threatened them with a pistol. Last year, Dallas was the site of the Texas Arms Exposition, whose ads encouraged readers to "buy, sell, or trade with our exhibitors," and promised that kids under 12 could get in for a dollar.

SO IT WAS natural that nobody thought to ask why the Viteks and the Robertses kept guns at home; people just do. I recall taking target practice with a .22 in a friend's back yard in the sixth grade, and a lot of my neighbors owned long guns. (A burglar broke into one house on the block and got away with a dozen rifles and shotguns.) Lamont Roberts's father, as a sergeant in the Department of Public Safety's Drivers License Bureau, was authorized to carry a revolver. A DPS spokesman told me Roberts's shotgun was a "personal" weapon and "was not an issued firearm." Why did he see fit to keep another gun in the house? Roberts's former supervisor at the DPS mentioned a possible answer: "He took the boy hunting, took him fishing. How this got out of hand I just don't know."

This inability to grasp the connection between having a gun around and getting shot is one of the great mysteries of Texas life. A friend of the Roberts family, like a lot of Texans, seemed to think that a family hunting weapon would help the father get along with "the boy." And Jan Bennett, a close friend of the Viteks, said of the Christmas gift that had killed them, "I don't think that Judy or Ed ever had any feelings that it was a bad thing." She explained to *Chronicle* reporters that the gun, like a bicycle, was something the Viteks felt Rick should have when he reached the appropriate age.

Gun enthusiasts prefer to blame psychological factors. "Guns don't kill people; people kill people," goes the National Rifle Association jingle. In hindsight it's easy to plead that Rick Vitek's parents should have been more careful in view of his recent emotional troubles. But even this precaution wouldn't keep guns out of the hands of seemingly trustworthy youths like Lamont Roberts, an outstanding student whose arrest shocked his classmates and teachers.

The NRA argues that guns are protectors. Yet a study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* last June found that for each intruder killed by a gun, 43 others were killed in the home. Handguns alone were involved in about 14,000 suicides, 9,000 murders, and 1,200 accidental deaths during each of the last five years; FBI figures showed only 158 justifiable killings of intruders in 1983.

The NRA's shtick about personal responsibility also rings hollow in the face of the many fatal accidents that happen just because there's a gun in the house. A year ago, there were 13 accidental shootings in Houston—all involving youths—within only two months. Officer Mike Cummings of the Houston Police Department's gun safety division read me excerpts from the files: "Children playing in bedroom, nine-year-old shot dead; kids playing fast-draw in a trailer home, 17-year-old shot dead; friends playing in apartment, eight-year-old shot dead; five children playing, ten-year-old finds gun and fires twice, 14-year-old shot dead . . ." Most of the accidents were fatal. Most involved handguns.

Cummings says the "public outcry" that followed the slew of gun accidents was "not so much for regulation as for parents to handle their guns responsibly." But obviously that wasn't happening, and although several organizations joined the police in pushing gun safety education, Cummings says the police "were already going into the schools and teaching about gun safety." The rate of child-related gun accidents did subside, but the latest shootings cast fresh doubt on the time-honored local notion that rifles should be readily available as stocking stuffers.

Since there's no state firearm registration law, it's hard to know how many guns there are in Texas. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms does keep tabs on automatic weapons: there were over 21,000 in the state as of last May—and that's only the official count. "In the rural areas," says Tom Fleming, the Harris County firearms examiner, "everybody carries a shotgun in their pickup truck." That's hyperbole, but a 1985 poll conducted by Texas A & M University found that 54 percent of families here keep a gun at home, well above the 44 percent who answered similarly in a simultaneous nationwide Gallup Poll.

Guns contributed to 65 percent of the homicides committed in Texas in 1985, compared to the national average of 58 percent. What's more, the murder rate in Texas is about 70 percent above the national rate, according to the latest mortality figures from the National Center for Health Statistics. Your chances of getting murdered with a gun in Texas are nearly twice the national average.

GUN REGULATION hasn't been an issue here since 1985, when the state NRA pushed through a bill to prohibit local restrictions on citizens' access to firearms. When the bill's Senate sponsor charged that his opponents sought to "outlaw guns," one indignant legislator defended himself by pointing out that he "owned more guns than most people." My state representative was a liberal, but political survival kept him on the NRA's side. "Candidates who are pro-gun control are best advised never to bring the issue up at all," says George Shipley, an Austin political strategist who has worked here for Democratic campaigns for many years. Even the police look the other way. "We don't advocate regulation," insists Cummings.

Meanwhile, the shooting goes on. The day after the Viteks were shot, a 30-year-old Houston man killed his wife and himself with a .25-caliber automatic pistol in their bathroom while the children slept. Two days later, a former Texas A & M football player was charged with murder after a 9 mm pistol discharged while he was allegedly trying to unjam it during a car ride. At Rick Vitek's arraignment for murder, he timidly asked the judge, "I'm not

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

going to be stuck with no needles or anything like that, am I, sir?" No, son. In Texas, we don't use needles.

WILLIAM SALETAN

William Saletan, a former TNR reporter-researcher, is a senior at Swarthmore College.

Two plus two equals five.

CHINA'S NEW MATH

SOME CULTURES have no history. They may be the happier ones, but it is hard to tell, since we usually forget to ask before destroying them. Some cultures have a linear history, like ours, for instance. We forge ahead with gusto and dynamism, we move forward faster and faster; only we are not too sure where exactly we are heading. Let us hope it is not into a brick wall or a black hole. Some, like China, appear to have a cyclical history. This simplifies the task for the historians. Yet if these idle bystanders enjoy watching the merry-go-round, it can in the long run produce some dizziness among its hapless passengers.

The editor of THE NEW REPUBLIC asked me to comment on the latest events in the People's Republic. Having already published too many books on these matters, at first I wished to decline his invitation. Chesterton, who had written much about Ireland earlier in his career, observed at the end of his life that he had nothing to say on the subject because he had nothing to unsay. However, we cannot always disappoint the expectations of our friends without providing at least a word of explanation. And it would be quite presumptuous to assume that what we wrote was read, and that what was read is still remembered.

The outline of the story is rather simple: the old Leader (whom foreigners generally consider to be a Humanist, a Poet, a Progressive, a Liberal, etc.) wants to get rid of the very man he had previously picked as his heir-designate. To provoke the downfall of his most trusted acolyte, he engineers civil disturbances by manipulating the widespread and permanent discontent of idealistic youths. These young people finally realize that they are being used, but when they attempt to make a stand on their own, it is already too late, and they are crushed. Order is being re-established by "killing one chicken in order to scare all the monkeys." The chicken is found in the cultural circles, since writers and artists are always expendable (you only need to keep a few domesticated specimens for the purpose of Cultural Exchanges and International Congresses; as for the rest, with communism on tap in every household, who needs culture anyway?). While prominent intellectuals are duly gagged and ritually humiliated in the big cities, the merriment takes a more casual style in remote provincial corners that are conveniently sheltered from outsiders' eyes. There, local officials eager to show their zeal, send a few cartloads of their own private enemies to the execution grounds.

Such is the basic plot. It needs only to be told once: erase all the individual names, fill in the blanks with new names, and every ten years or so the old story will be ready for recycling.

A "China Expert" disagreed with my views. "No, he told me, China is actually evolving, and not merely revolving—however slowly and painfully. There are recurrent setbacks, it is true, but if the graph of these zigzags is seen from a suitable distance (which the victims cannot usually reach, I grant you) it will become apparent that the country is unmistakably inching forward. Look at the Soviet Union, for example. There are some achievements from the Khrushchev era that remain irreversible, and the same will be true for Gorbachev. A return to pure Stalinism—or to pure Maoism—is now inconceivable." He was right, of course. Yet his Soviet reference reminded me of a story told by Yuri Krotkov in his *Red Monarch*. It went like this: A certain country was under the rule of a mad and bloodthirsty tyrant. The fundamental axiom of the official ideology was "two plus two makes six." Everyone lived in a state of permanent terror. Eventually the tyrant died and was succeeded by another one—not as mad and not as strong. Some readjustments had to be made. It was proclaimed that the fundamental axiom would henceforth be "two plus two makes five." This provoked a great commotion in all intellectual circles. A brilliant young mathematician was moved to rethink the entire issue by himself. After many months of feverish research he discovered that, in fact, "two plus two makes four"! Greatly excited, he wanted to publish his discovery when, early one morning, two men in gray raincoats knocked at his door and asked him softly: "What are you up to, Comrade? Do you *really* wish to return to the time when two plus two made six?"

SIMON LEYS

Simon Leys is the author of *The Burning Forest* (New Republic Books).

Master Harold and the boys in Chicago.

SPOILS AND SPOILERS

LAST DECEMBER, on the tenth anniversary of the death of Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, his successor, Harold Washington, paid proper tribute. "He was not a perfect man," Washington said, standing beneath a giant poster of Hizzoner. "But he was as perfect as you can be in an imperfect world." Daley, in fact, was an arrogant autocrat who kept his big-city machine alive long after other major cities had abandoned theirs. But for ten years, Chicago

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

politicians have striven to capture his illusion of omnipotence. Later, on a local television special, Washington said sentimentally, "He was like a spiritual father to me." Quite a contrast to Washington's description of Daley in 1983 as a "racist" who thought blacks were "supposed to live just like some slaves on the plantation."

Back then such sentiments resonated through black audiences and frightened white audiences in the wards of a city often called the most segregated this side of Johannesburg. Today, after four years as Chicago's first black mayor, Washington believes that the way to win the next election is not by inflaming racial animosities, but by appealing to the spirit of unity. His opponents, however, argue that his anti-machine zeal has led to unnecessary confrontations. His support among whites remains soft as he, a political independent, continues to fight Daley's heirs. The remnants of the machine are now a cluster of feuding factions that are willing to agree on one thing: Washington must go. As a result, they have given new definition to the word "spoiler." In Chicago these days, it means anyone who might split the white vote.

WASHINGTON TOOK office in 1983 with solid black support and just enough non-black votes to beat Republican Bernard Epton by a two percent margin in a contest riddled with racial bitterness. As mayor, he improved his popularity rating among whites as soon as they saw he was not going to bus their children, build public housing on their blocks, or tear the city apart. Skeptical whites were also relieved to see him appoint respected reform-oriented leaders to key positions in his administration, repair streets that had not seen work crews in years, improve trash collection, and perhaps most important, pay regular visits to the city's crazy quilt of ethnic neighborhoods.

Most of Washington's white support is concentrated in the city's more prosperous and politically independent wards along Lake Michigan. Since blacks make up about 42 percent of the total vote and whites about 50 percent, his opponents figure he cannot be beaten unless the strongest possible white hope challenges him one-on-one, whether in the February 24 Democratic primary election or the April 7 general election. The jockeying for ballot position this year has spawned a wide variety of openly Machiavellian strategies.

The strongest of all the challengers, former Mayor Jane Byrne, declared her candidacy more than a year ago just so she could promote the perception that anyone who entered later was a come-lately and therefore a "spoiler." Her ploy worked. This time Richard Daley, son of the late mayor who lost to Washington in the three-way 1983 primary, bowed out.

But the anti-Washington forces, knowing that Washington could beat Byrne in the primary, want to have a shot at him in the general election too. The leader of Washington's opposition bloc, Alderman Edward Vrdolyak, decided to declare himself—as a candidate of the Illinois Solidarity Party. Vrdolyak is chairman of the Cook County Democratic Organization, the soul of the old machine. "I won't be a spoiler," he said. Then County Assessor Thomas Hynes, with the backing of the Daley faction, entered on his own "Chicago First" party. He would have run as a Democrat in the primary, he said, but he did not want to be a spoiler. Vrdolyak was furious. He called Hynes a surrogate for the younger Daley, "the people who gave you Harold Washington four years ago." Hynes returned the spoiler charge, pointing out that, as low as his name recognition might be, polls showed him to be more popular than Vrdolyak.

Washington was delighted. "The more the merrier," he said. But when the deadline came for entering the primary, Byrne got what she wanted, a one-on-one with Washington.

Of course these ballot gyrations would not be necessary if Washington had only cooperated with his enemies, either by burying the hatchet as Byrne did after she beat the machine in 1979, or by doing a bad job as mayor. Neither has occurred.

Washington refused to do business as usual with the machine. As soon as he tried to take charge of the 50-member council, the "Council Wars" erupted. Led by Vrdolyak, a majority of 29 council members did their best to make Washington look helpless and pitiful. They stalled his legislation, hooted at him from the floor, held his most important appointments hostage, and prevented his good-government allies from getting their hands on the machine's last remaining fiefdoms of jobs and influence, such as the park board.

Even so, Washington introduced reforms that were new concepts to a city run for years by back room deals. He opened up the city's budget process to public scrutiny, linked downtown development to neighborhood revitalization, and included community organizations in major decision-making. Unfortunately, the presence of many staff members inherited from previous administrations and Washington's penchant for appointing independent-minded professionals slowed the progress of some programs, and some of his appointees and council allies have been targets of a federal kickback probe, although the U.S. attorney has cleared Washington of wrongdoing.

POWER SHIFTED in Washington's favor last spring. Special elections ordered by the courts to correct gerrymandering that had diluted black and Hispanic voting strength resulted in victories for Washington-allied candidates in four of the redrawn wards. The "Vrdolyak 29" suddenly became, in the words of one Washington adviser, "the Jive 25." With the council evenly split, Washington held the tie-breaking vote. He immediately freed the appointive hostages, reorganized council committees, levied a new property tax to balance the city budget, and passed new ordinances to codify tenant's rights and modernize the city's antiquated building codes.

Local and national media hailed him as "Chicago's new mayor." Editorials in major downtown newspapers and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the leading local business weekly praised his handling of federal block grant funds and a general obligation bond levy he passed by making personal appeals in white wards. Three-and-a-half years after taking office, he was finally taking charge. Aaron Freeman, the black comedian who once joked about the cosmic battles between "Darth Vrdolyak" and "Harold Skytalker," said after the power shift, "It's no longer 'Council Wars.' It's 'Master Harold and the Boys.' "

Washington downplays the "new mayor" theme. "Yes, the new majority gives us a certain amount of freedom and lebensraum that we didn't have before," he says. "But we were getting along pretty damn well without it." His minority coalition of 21 aldermen (which included five whites) always held strong, stopping Vrdolyak from building enough votes to override the mayor's veto. "We stopped them! Our veto-proof vote forced the accommodation of the majority with us because we actually controlled the government. And everything eventually passed by a unanimous or almost unanimous majority."

Washington's new powers have brought him closer than ever to Daley's image of omnipotence and cast his opponents in the role of sore losers. Vrdolyak, for example, shifted from portraying Washington as incompetent to portraying him as an ominous black boss. Washington started an organization called "Save Our City" that recalled an embarrassing speech Vrdolyak made to machine supporters during the 1983 race. "It would be the worst day in the history of Chicago if your candidate was not elected. It's a racial thing. Don't kid yourself. I'm calling on you to save your city, to save your precinct." Newspapers more recently printed an internal memo in which a Vrdolyak aide advised him to take a "populist" approach that appears to justify a bold appeal to white ethnic resentment of black advances. In a way, Vrdolyak is casting himself as the Jesse Jackson of white ethnic Chicago.

IS WASHINGTON building a black machine? Mayor Daley used to say that a machine is only a machine to those who are outside of it; to insiders it is an "organization." Washington does not have an organization as such. The Democratic Party is still chaired by Vrdolyak. Nor does Washington have Daley's army of precinct captains. Anti-patronage court decisions have removed from political control almost all of the jobs the machine used to hand out (or take away) as political favors. Members of the Vrdolyak camp slipped a tape recorder into a private meeting in Washington's home in the hope that they could catch him acting like a boss behind closed doors. When the tape was released, Washington was heard sounding like a professional manager of government.

On the other hand, Washington does have a multiracial coalition of churches, community groups, good-government types, civil rights leaders, unreconstructed '60s activists pressuring him toward liberal reform, and a few old-style political rascals pressuring him to behave like past bosses and bring home the gravy to black wards. In the classic Chicago sense of political power and influence, this loose coalition has "clout" as long as Washington is in office, but its diversity inhibits him from becoming an old-time machine boss, even if he wanted to be.

New voter registration figures show there has been a decline in all-white wards and an increase in the black wards. Attempts by Byrne and Vrdolyak to counter the mayor's voter registration efforts apparently failed to pay off as they had hoped. If Washington is re-elected—and the most recent polls indicate his chances are very good—he should be able to consolidate his power in a way that his first turbulent term did not allow. White voters may not be embracing Washington in a big way, but, after four years of his stewardship, they no longer seem to be afraid of him.

CLARENCE PAGE

Clarence Page is a columnist for the *Chicago Tribune.*

Anti-Semitism in the wings.

FOUL PLAY

"WHAT WERE the choices facing the Jews during the Holocaust—resistance or cooperation? When does cooperation become collaboration? How guilty were the Allies, the international Jewish Community, the Zionist leadership and the Jews in Hungary themselves?" With this advance publicity, the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs in mid-January announced the imminent production of a new play, titled *Perdition*, by Jim Allen. How had Jews come to be so strangely divided into factions consisting of an international community, Zionist leadership, and just plain Jews? And guilty of their own mass murder?

The Royal Court Theatre occupies a central position in British theatrical life. John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* was staged here in 1956, and since then a policy of social commitment has been maintained by the theatrical management. The Theatre Upstairs, a smaller auditorium, is consistently "controversial"—in other words, flying the flag of the socialist left. Does affiliation to the socialist left these days include being anti-Jewish? *Perdition* seems to affirm so.

Allen, aged 62, of Irish-Catholic origins, formerly a docker, loses few occasions to proclaim himself a Marxist, adding that he is an anti-fascist. As a television scriptwriter, he came to attention in 1975, with *Days of Hope*, a series put out by the BBC. Wicked British capitalists were depicted as smashing the revolution in the aftermath of the First World War, but the closing scene showed two proletarian leaders, standing in a sunny green field, assuring each other that since they still had Comrade Lenin, Marxism would win the day.

Perdition, Allen's first play, already had a history before

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

its script reached the Royal Court. Last March it was submitted to the Manchester Library Theatre. A decision was taken to stage it there. A Jewish actress, chosen for a part, read the play and was horrified by it. The play attempted to single out Zionist leaders before and during the war as a separate class of rich capitalists, with private and political interests in betraying the Jewish masses to the Nazis, in effect making themselves accomplices in genocide. Not only were the Zionists all of one mind, they were uniformly cruel and conspiratorial in obtaining their ends.

The actress contacted Martin Gilbert, Churchill's biographer and a leading authority on contemporary Jewish history. Gilbert found some 60 historical errors, distortions, and simple lies. The Manchester Library Theatre then called off its proposed production.

At the heart of the play is the fate of Dr. Rudolf Kastner, a Zionist leader in Budapest in 1944. A truthful play about this tragic person might well illuminate moral issues as extreme as they are rare, fortunately for everyone. Hungary was the last country in occupied Europe where Jews were confronted with the Final Solution. The German army deposed the long-serving but insufficiently pliant Admiral Horthy in March 1944, in order to impose a regime of their own. Adolf Eichmann, experienced in the administration of mass murder, arrived to take charge of the deportations to Auschwitz. In accordance with the practice everywhere else in Europe, Eichmann chose to deal with institutional Jewish leaders, in the correct belief that this semblance of law and order was essential to keeping concealed the true purposes of the Nazis.

By that stage in the war, Eichmann and those in his position had complicating factors to bear in mind. Auschwitz might soon be captured by the advancing Soviet army. The majority of European Jews were already dead, and exceptional haste and deviousness would have to be applied to the Hungarian community. In the event that Germany lost the war, it might be as well to have an alibi to offer the victorious Allies. So Eichmann approached Kastner with an offer. He would allow Kastner to save some Jews of his own choosing, and he opened the prospect of further similar exchanges in which Jewish lives would be bartered for trucks, civilian supplies, or money.

KASTNER ACCEPTED. A convoy of 1,684 Jews was sent by train to safety, and it included members of his own family. During a 1957 trial in Israel, in which Kastner and his role had been called into question, a judge declared that Kastner "had sold his soul to the Devil." Two Hungarian survivors afterward shot and killed Kastner.

In *Perdition*, a trial of Kastner—renamed Yaron, a small change, but with a significant Israeli accent—is similarly staged, but before a British judge. In the course of this trial, among many false accusations, Kastner is portrayed as having taken the initiative with Eichmann, rather than the other way around. A Jewish Council in a provincial town is shown denouncing local Jews and then giving a party for the SS, when in fact the original members had disobeyed orders and had all been shot, as were the members of the second council replacing them. So immoral are the Zionists said to be that they turned over to the Germans three Jewish agents, including the well-known Hanna Szenes, parachuted in to organize resistance. In fact, the three were captured.

Few have been harder on Kastner than Soviet officials and propagandists. His case, taken out of context and dehumanized beyond recognition, has been a stick with which Soviet propagandists beat Israel. A characteristic Tass broadcast of February 1, 1978, states, "In 1944 Eichmann and one of the Zionist leaders, Kastner, signed an agreement on Hungarian Jews. The agreement guaranteed the lives of 600 [sic] 'prominent' Jews, while condemning to death 800,000 Jews without sufficient money to pay for their lives. The Zionists' collaboration with the Nazis . . . led to a catastrophe which cost the lives of nearly 6,000,000 Jews. This shatters the myth that the Zionists defend and express the interests of the Jewish people."

It so happened that at the very moment in March 1986 when *Perdition* was being discussed at the Manchester Library Theatre, Igor Yakovlev, the Soviet representative at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, repeated the party line: "It is well-known, for example, that one of the leaders of Zionism, Rudolf Kastner, helped the SS hangman Eichmann to send half a million Jews to their death. . . . Trying to save themselves and their allies, the Zionists and their allies became the agents of the Gestapo. Many thousands of those Jews who were killed by Hitler lay on their consciences. These are the roots of the present day policy of State Zionism in Israel." Ambassador Yakovlev might have been summing up *Perdition*. In case the point is still obscure, *Perdition* closes with Kastner-Yaron repenting of his Zionist sins, and hoping that Israel will be returned forthwith to the Arabs.

What occurred when the script of *Perdition* arrived at the Royal Court is somewhat disputed. The artistic director, Max Stafford Clark, and the literary director, Michael Hastings, defended the play, and continue to do so. Nonetheless it was sent for comment to an outside historian, Dr. David Cesarini, of St. Mary's College, in London. Like Gilbert, he listed the errors and found the play a travesty of the facts. The theater's management council was by now aware of fundamental objections, and set conditions of control and scrutiny that Stafford Clark found unacceptable. The production has been withdrawn. Subsequently, Allen presented his play to other theaters, including the Olympia Theatre in Dublin, but so far all have refused to stage it. No doubt this is not the end of the matter.

Far from reconsidering his play, Allen complains loudly about "censorship," about "Jewish historians," and the Zionist lobby that is as hard to identify as it is powerful and repressive. In one interview (in *Time Out*) Allen claims that "without undue humility, I'm saying that this is the most lethal attack on Zionism ever written, because it touches the heart of the most abiding myth of modern history, the Holocaust." The Holocaust, he goes on to add in language typical of the man, is "a cozy set of family secrets, skeletons in closets." In another interview (in *The*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Stage), he likens himself to a Soviet dissident, saying that the possibility of Zionist violence against him arouses "an element of fear." The play's purpose, as he resumes it, is to reveal how "Zionism has successfully annexed the Jewish religion in order to obtain biblical sanction to seize Arab land to expel the Palestinian."

Allen actually presents himself as the champion of the Jews, self-appointed to save them from Zionism. This in itself is a most unconvincing slur. He is probably being quite sincere, which only goes to prove how easily and deeply the contemporary Soviet manipulation of anti-Semitism has taken hold of the socialist left.

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

David Pryce-Jones's latest book is *The Afternoon Sun*, a novel about the encounter between Germans and Jews (Weidenfeld & Nicolson).

Can Thatcher follow suit?

KOHL ON A ROLL

FOR SEVERAL years Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany faced a heavy barrage of media criticism, with the television more negative than the radio, the radio more critical than the weeklies, and the weeklies less friendly than the daily newspapers. He was described as a bumbling, not very clever, not very honest politician who would lead his party to inevitable defeat. Then, suddenly, a few months ago, the media discovered that however much they disliked the Christian Democrats, they would still win the elections, and that it might be a massive victory at that. This premature announcement that the race was over harmed Kohl more than the three years of derision, because some of his supporters are wary of an absolute Christian Democratic majority. In the end the weakened CDU still emerged as the largest party, and with its partner it has a comfortable majority for another four years in parliament.

The Social Democrats did as well as expected. They had a capable candidate in Johannes Rau, a moderate, who is not very well versed in foreign affairs and defense policy but is highly respected as prime minister of one of the biggest German *Länder*. He had originally hoped to attain an absolute majority, which was never a realistic target. As it happened, the Social Democrats would not have achieved this even in cooperation with the Greens.

The tragedy of the Social Democrats is that they seem to have no hope in the foreseeable future of returning to power, largely because the party has moved to the left at a time when there has been no such trend in the country at large. A Social Democratic Party headed by a left-wing candidate would have no chance to attract the sections of the population necessary to achieve a breakthrough. But if the party is headed by a man of the center or center-right, much of his time and energy will have to be devoted to inner-party squabbles. (The era of Helmut Schmidt was an exception; a man like Schmidt would have no chance to be appointed as the party's leader today.) Four more years in opposition will put additional strain on party unity. Like the British Labor Party, the German Social Democrats tend to become more irresponsible in opposition.

The Greens received eight percent of the total, and welcomed this as a historic victory. The party gained voters in comparison with the general elections four years ago—but hardly any in comparison with the elections of the European Parliament and local elections in recent years. This is the kind of movement that cannot afford to stagnate. Once it loses its momentum, decline sets in. The Green movement is a generational phenomenon, particularly strong among those 25 to 40 years old, and in affluent districts and university towns. Among the youngest voters it is not as strong.

Ideologically the outstanding feature of the Greens is confusion, some of it deliberate. Since most of the party's basic ecological demands have been taken over by the major parties, the Greens have wandered off into various other directions, frequently contradictory. In a longer perspective, this kind of catch-all movement does not have much of a future unless it can transform itself into a genuine populist movement. Otherwise splits are bound to occur, perhaps not tomorrow or the day after, but probably before the end of the decade.

The Liberals are also a curious conglomerate. There aren't many of them, and they derive most of their support from voters who distrust the two major parties. Every German voter has two votes, and the Liberals were the second choice of many people. Like a vote for the Greens, a vote for the Liberals is in some ways a protest vote. Thus the two smaller parties emerged as the victors in the elections. But it was not the kind of victory that inspires great confidence for their future.

WHAT DOES all this mean for the future of German politics? Both the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats are worried, and want to find out what went wrong. To a certain extent damage was caused by the bickering inside the two big parties. The Social Democrats lost fewer votes than their rivals, but they know that with a stronger candidate than Kohl the CDU will probably do better next time. The Social Democrats also know that economic deterioration would not necessarily give them more popular support. Whatever their misgivings about the CDU, the German public trusts them on economic policy.

German foreign policy is not likely to change either. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who was until recently the leader of the Liberal Party and who still is foreign minister for the Kohl government, has tried to dissociate himself somewhat from U.S. foreign policy. Genscher has worked hard for an improvement in relations between the Bundesrepublik and the Soviet bloc and the Third World. But he is a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shrewd man, and he knows that his freedom to maneuver is limited. In any case, German foreign policy-makers will be preoccupied in the years to come with inner-European problems. Relations with France, Britain, and other European countries are not as friendly as they were ten or 20 years ago. This has to do in large part with economic rivalries and the fact that the steam has gone out of European cooperation. Reviving it will demand greater effort and more attention.

NO ONE followed the German elections more closely than the British. Some time in late spring or early summer the British will hold their parliamentary elections. Do the German elections hold any lessons for England?

Whatever the polls may be saying now, it would be a fatal mistake from the Tory's point of view to assume that victory is already theirs. No one doubts Mrs. Thatcher's toughness, but she has an unfortunate tendency to antagonize voters, women even more than men. Some of the hard decisions she has had to take in her years in office were perhaps inescapable, but her image, that of lacking in social conscience and compassion, will be difficult to shed.

The record of the Tories has not been impressive. If the British electorate still prefers them to Labor, it has mainly to do with the even more unfortunate record of the Labor Party, which has been in opposition for almost a decade. The party has been infiltrated by all kinds of eccentric elements, such as neo-Trotskyites of various persuasions, and has been shaken by Homeric battles between Third World and gay caucuses. This history—along with the legendary idiocies of local government from Liverpool to London, the reckless spending on far-fetched projects, and the neglect of education and elementary services—has made the party a laughingstock.

Neil Kinnock, the party's leader and a genuinely nice man, has done his best to give the party a respectable face for the coming elections. To a limited extent he has succeeded. The party has a strong base especially in northern England, but also in the Midlands and Scotland, which have suffered gravely from the economic decline. On a recent visit to northwest England I drove through a small town that was literally half-deserted. Friends explained that it had never really recovered from the slump of the 1930s. It was a shattering experience. I had never seen anything like it before, and it is not the only such place.

Kinnock is committed to unilateral disarmament. True, he promises that the Labor Party, if elected, would compensate by building up Britain's conventional defense, but no one inside the party or outside takes this seriously. There was a time when the leaders of both big British parties were reasonably well-informed about international affairs, as befitting those responsible for an empire or commonwealth, but this is no longer so. There are a few exceptions, such as Dennis Healey, the party spokesman on foreign affairs, but they have had to trim their sails.

The prospect, then, is one of polarization. It is not a pleasant one as far as the quality of British political and social life is concerned. If the Tories return with a reduced majority, as seems likely, they may have to enter a coalition with the Liberal-Social Democratic Alliance. But given the vagaries of the British electoral system, the Alliance may still end up with only a handful of seats in Parliament. The Labor leadership loathes the Alliance, but it has a vested interest in its success, because all public opinion polls show that it takes more votes from the Conservatives than from Labor. This creates a complicated constellation in which the Conservatives may have to direct most of their attacks against the Alliance, which is a much less convenient target than Labor. The Alliance is a movement full of men and women of goodwill, and it has achieved surprising successes in by-elections. But it has not yet shown that it has the discipline and the stamina to stay the course of a national election, and to emerge as a third force in British policy.

If it does, and the prospect has much to recommend itself, it will be the most important development in British politics in 60 years. With a little luck it may constitute a turning point in the history of a country that in many ways has fallen far behind its European neighbors.

WALTER LAQUEUR

Walter Laqueur is chairman of the research council of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

Defunding the right.

A TASTE FOR PORK

"DEFUNDING THE LEFT" was all the rage among conservatives in the early days of the Reagan administration. The Cato Institute published the ominously titled book *Destroying Democracy*, which detailed how "tax-funded politics" were subverting the republic. Under the guise of helping the needy, the book argued, liberals were lining their pockets and lobbying for ever-increasing government funds. For conservatives the theory explained both liberalism's political success and the durability of social problems in the face of massive federal spending. Cutting off the flow of funds to the left was "the No. 1 goal" of the Conservative Caucus in the early 1980s, according to its national director, Howard Phillips. Phillips convinced Senator Jeremiah Denton to introduce a bill mandating that grants be given only to "politically neutral" groups.

The bill went nowhere, and five years later there is little talk on the right of "defunding"—perhaps because so many right-wing groups are on the dole. Were Phillips to compile his list of tax-funded activists today, it would include such conservative stalwarts as the American Enterprise Institute, the Ethics and Public Policy Center, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Adam Smith Institute, the Lehrman Institute, the American Legislative Exchange Council, the Federalist Society, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Republican Party. All of them favor vastly scaling back the role of government, yet all use federal funds to advance their political views. And if the scale of support is still small compared with the money that goes to liberal organizations, the waste and absurdities dwarf anything liberal patronage has produced.

A CASE in point is Robert Woodson and the Center for Neighborhood Enterprise that he founded in 1983. Woodson, who once worked for the Urban League, has for several years played the role of the Reagan administration's flack in the black community. When Reagan needs a "black leader" to meet with on Martin Luther King's birthday, Woodson has been more than willing to stop by. Woodson believes that black creativity has been stifled, not by racism, but by an army of white liberal poverty merchants who want to keep blacks dependent on the state. These bureaucrats constantly harp on the problems of the black community. "But when longer-range policies are made and, more important, when grants are handed out," Woodson wrote in the *New York Times*, "it is the professional social-welfare groups and the civil rights leaders who are on the receiving end."

Half huckster, half reformer, Woodson is a phenomenon unique to the Reagan administration: the armchair capitalist. His liberal-bashing has pulled in grants from groups such as the Scaife Family Trust and the Heritage Foundation and, this year, $2 million from Amoco Corporation. But Woodson has also collected from federal agencies such as HUD and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). In 1981 Woodson testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee in favor of dismantling OJJDP, but over the last two years his group has received a half million dollars from that same agency, and opened a branch office in Chicago with the funds.

"I still don't think OJJDP should exist," Woodson told me, "but as long as Congress refuses to kill it, I have to try and see that these funds are getting to the black community and not to pay for more studies by white professors." Woodson's group uses OJJDP funds to make "technical assistance grants" to small community organizations that work with delinquent youths. More than half of the funds are chewed up in administrative costs. In August Woodson used $45,000 in OJJDP funds to hold a three-day conference and "prayer breakfast" on the black family co-sponsored by presidential candidate Pat Robertson and his Christian Broadcast Network. Woodson, who met Robertson when he appeared on the "700 Club," told the *Washington Post*: "I don't remember CBN being a religious organization. It's a news organization."

Under the direction of Al Regnery, OJJDP became the biggest policy pork barrel the right wing has ever seen. (Regnery left office amid controversy in May 1986; see "Al Regnery's Secret Life" by Murray Waas, June 23, 1986.) James McClellan, a dean at Jerry Falwell's Liberty University, received a $186,710 non-competitive grant to design a textbook on the Constitution stressing states' rights and limited government. McClellan's Center for Judicial Studies also received $127,864 from the National Endowment for the Humanities to hold eight seminars applying the doctrine of "original intent" to the Bill of Rights, and $337,000 from the Legal Services Corporation to promote "religious freedom" in public schools. "Personally, I wish that all of these programs were abolished, but it's self-defeating if conservatives leave those dollars out there for liberal groups to pick up," McClellan said.

Other beneficiaries of Regnery's non-competitive grants include George Nicholson, a personal friend of Edwin Meese and an unsuccessful Republican candidate for California attorney general who received $4 million to establish something called the National School Safety Center in Sacramento; Judith Reisman, who received $800,000 to study lewd cartoons in *Penthouse* and *Playboy*; and the Washington Consulting Group, whose $900,000 contract was canceled after it was discovered that a cousin of George Bush was on the payroll. Phyllis Schlafly, head of the anti-feminist Eagle Forum, secured $622,905 from the Justice Department to create the Task Force on Families in Crisis as an alternative to battered women's shelters—which Schlafly believes encourage lesbianism and broken homes.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, which has received $3.3 million in OJJDP money, could almost be a parody of a public interest group. The organization, established in 1984, has spent millions whipping up a storm of news stories, public service announcements, and milk carton photographs explaining that over one-and-a-half million children disappear from the face of the earth each year. Unfortunately for the center, reporters soon discovered that there were no more than a few thousand missing children in the entire country. After two years the center managed to track down only 120 children, most of them runaways. A recent brochure defends the center's factual insouciance: "No factor has more soundly clouded the issue of missing children and served to diminish the seriousness of the problem than that of statistics. . . . How many missing children are there? Far too many."

THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT also underwrites the titillating "Commentaries on Justice" radio spots, produced by the ex-head of the American Conservative Union James C. Roberts and funded by a $25,000 grant from the National Institute of Justice. According to an NIJ pamphlet, "On issues from designer drugs to international terrorism, from organized mobs to violence in schools, public officials . . . enlarge on their own experiences and concerns." Roberts allows that the program is probably a waste of funds, but adds the refrain of all right-wingers on the dole: "If the money is appropriated there's no reason conservatives shouldn't grab it."

The latest and perhaps most improbable source of conservative grants is the U.S. Peace Institute, which was established by Congress in 1984 to "promote international peace and the resolution of conflicts among nations and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

peoples of the world without recourse to violence." Among the Peace Institute's first round of grantees were the right-wing Lehrman Institute, which received $25,000 to hold seminars commemorating the 25th anniversary of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and the James Madison Foundation. (The Lehrman Institute has also drawn $46,000 from the U.S. Information Agency.) The Madison Foundation—which publishes a newsletter edited by Evron Kirkpatrick, Jeane Kirkpatrick's husband—received $91,400 to counter the influence of the left in U.S. divinity schools. Among the concepts the Madison Foundation seeks to salvage are the "just war" theory and the morality of Star Wars and Third World interventionism. George Weigel, the director, asserts that the aim is to "raise the level of public debate" on religion and foreign policy. Political thinking in the seminaries may be muddled, but this hardly justifies spending tax money on neoconservative propaganda.

Some of the biggest servings of intellectual pork have gone to a few formerly obscure West Coast think tanks with strong ties to members of the Reagan administration. The San Francisco-based Institute for Contemporary Studies, whose board members once included Caspar Weinberger and Edwin Meese, received a grant for $4 million from the Agency for International Development in 1986—allowing it to open a new center in Panama and establish a network of sympathetic economists around the world.

Even more ubiquitous on government grant lists are three policy shops in Southern California, all loosely associated with the Claremont Colleges: Public Research, Syndicated; the Claremont Institute; and the Rose Institute. Since 1982 PRS has received $453,056 from the NEH to distribute articles on the Constitution by Edwin Meese, William French Smith, and Ronald Reagan. The Claremont Institute, a PRS offshoot, secured $303,580 from the NEH to sponsor conferences, lectures, and publications pushing its conservative views on the Constitution. The Claremont Institute received another $140,000 from the NEH for a documentary on Winston Churchill and $400,000 from the U.S. Information Agency to indoctrinate foreign journalists about the principles of American democracy. The Rose Institute recently completed a million-dollar study for the OJJDP.

The worst that can be said of many right-wing grants is that they are a waste of money; others border on illegality. The Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs funnels thousands to Catholic groups to instruct schoolchildren that birth control is "intrinsically evil" under Church law—a clear violation of church-state separation. A more subtle area is the use of federal grants for lobbying purposes. Technically, it is illegal to use federal money to influence Congress on any legislation, a restriction that was tightened by the Reagan administration in 1984 to include overhead costs as well. But in October 1985, the State Department awarded a $276,000 secret contract to a Washington public relations firm to lobby for *contra* aid and to create advertisements targeting members of Congress who opposed the administration. And through the actions of agencies such as USIA, AID, and the National Endowment for Democracy—which among them fund dozens of conservative groups to do political work abroad—the principle of political neutrality is abandoned at our borders.

Another way that federal funds are used to change the outcome of the political process is by lobbying at the state level. The most egregious example is the "model juvenile justice code" developed by the Rose Institute under the million-dollar grant from the Justice Department.

The Rose Institute—a think tank that has worked primarily on voter redistricting studies for the California Republican Party—had no experience in juvenile law. The institute soon discovered that its staff was incapable of drafting the code. In desperation, they turned to the American Legislative Exchange Council, which represents 2,000 of the most conservative state legislators in the country, eventually paying them $400,000 from the grant. ALEC had never worked in juvenile law, but had backed far right causes like the right-to-work law, ending the insanity defense, and a balanced budget amendment.

The result was a code that abandoned efforts to rehabilitate juvenile offenders and substituted a punishment-oriented system resembling that for adult offenders. In July the code was "rejected and repudiated" by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, and it has since been criticized by almost every group in the juvenile law field. "It's an embarrassment," said Justice spokesman John Lawton. "We're definitely dissatisfied with the work they did."

The Justice Department has asked ALEC to rewrite the code to incorporate the criticisms, but in January ALEC sent out a draft to state lawmakers around the country in hopes of introducing bills this legislative session. The Rose Institute has now decided to use private sources instead. "With private money there's fewer hoops to jump through; we can work directly on legislation," Executive Director Ralph A. Rossum said. "With our track record at Justice, there should be no problem finding a sponsor."

SO PERVASIVE is this intellectual patronage that few conservative luminaries have not received at least a small dose of "tainted" funds. The conservative scholar Russell Kirk used an NEH grant to make his *Roots of American Order* into a television show. Ex-Secretary of the Treasury William Simon, *Commentary*'s Midge Decter, and the philosopher Sidney Hook were among the "social democrats" sent to a Socialist International meeting at USIA expense. And Decter, Norman Podhoretz, Irving Kristol, and Joseph Sobran were all participants in a 1984 State Department seminar on "moral equivalence," receiving honoraria of up to $4,000 for their efforts.

In practice, "defunding the left" has not led to a free marketplace of ideas, but to an intellectual franchise for friends of the administration. "Given a choice," wrote the authors of *Destroying Democracy* about the tax-funded left, "many taxpayers would not support the political agendas of these recipients of governmental largess." Hear, hear.

CROCKER COULSON

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ON THE HILL

THE OLD BREED STRIKES BACK

BY CHRISTOPHER J. MATTHEWS

ON THE SURFACE, there is a clubby permanence to the life of Democrats on Capitol Hill. Enter the Members' Dining Room on any weekday morning and you'll find the black Irish of Massachusetts having breakfast at their regular spot, over near the wall. The odor of bacon and eggs mixes well with political talk. When the House opens at noon, the far Democratic end of the chamber becomes the "Pennsylvania corner," the daytime hangout of tough-talking men of labor, guys who could be just as comfortable sitting in their local Knights of Columbus hall. Across the back, hard against the center aisle, there's Redneck Row, the yellow-dog confederates of the old Democratic coalition.

There is a rhythm and a pungency to this Tuesday-through-Thursday world. From beneath the Visitors' Gallery there comes the beehive hum of the party cloakroom, where members chomp hot dogs and share the day's scuttlebutt. The radio music in the members' lavatory, provided by the man who has shined shoes there for decades, remains Big Band and nostalgic. Over in the Rayburn Building there is the gym, where the young guys play pickup basketball and the old men pass out cigars in the steam room.

Like any other club, the House has rituals that outlive its members and soften their differences. On the night that Tip O'Neill turned over the gavel for the last time, there was a sense of circumstance in the old antebellum chamber, and of continuity. "I send a resolution to the desk," said his friend Tom Foley of Spokane, Washington, reciting the motions of his speaker's last adjournment. To those who sat in ceremonious silence, the words from Jefferson's Rules had a warm familiarity. They set a tone of comity, a tone that the Republican leader, Bob Michel, would continue as he took the chair to preside over this final tribute to a man who had been both sparring partner and golfing partner.

Yet something has changed. Twelve years ago last November, the American electorate sent a "new breed" of legislator to Washington: young, brashly independent, irreverent of its elders and their system. It was the year of Watergate. Suburban districts from Long Island to Denver that had been counted safely Republican for years used their ballots to punish Richard Nixon. Offended by corruption and cover-up, they wanted to shake the Grand Old Party to its roots. They booted out party loyalists like New Jersey's Charles Sandman, who had sat on the Judiciary Committee defending Nixon to the last. Rejecting cronyism and parochialism, they elected a slate of fresh-faced candidates pledged to a new order of ethics and independence.

Ironically, those most affected by this suburban coup have not been the Republicans, but the Democrats. More than a decade later, those who campaigned against Watergate in 1974 and 1976 remain, in style and attitude, the new kids on the political block. Well into their 40s, they retain a non-conformist manner that wears well in the district, but still stirs resentment among the regulars.

Last month's political dunking of Les Aspin, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, revealed the depth of this resentment. Aspin, an older but quintessential New Breeder, had flagrantly broken the old rules. He had abandoned the "retailer" approach to congressional politics, the traditional "one customer at a time" method of dealing with his colleagues, and he had adopted the new-style "wholesaler" approach—going after the mass market. He had deserted his party comrades on one tough vote after another—from the MX to procurement reform to aid to the *contras.* For this he would pay a price. On a preliminary caucus ballot, taken January 7, he was denied renomination as chairman by a vote of 130-124. For two weeks, the once and future chairman was then drowned in public insult by a band of colleagues embittered as much by his values as by his votes.

To save himself, Aspin resorted in desperation to the classic tactic of the Old Breed. The man who had risen to power on the press release shifted to the personal approach, telephoning one member of Congress at a time. The state-of-the-art pol was forced to salvage his ambitions the old way. The man who loves doing the Brinkley show was forced to stand at the little congressional subway handing out palm cards. In the end, he won renomination to the Armed Services chair by a vote of 133-116. His victory was less a tribute to his stewardship or his new-found style than to what economists call the "least comparative disadvantage"—all things considered, he was not as bad as the competition for the post.

This ritual immersion of Les Aspin was merely one episode in a larger saga. Ever since 1974, the year of the "Watergate babies," a fight has been brewing on Capi-

---

Christopher J. Matthews, who served as administrative assistant to House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill Jr., is president of the Government Research Corporation.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tol Hill. On one side are the regulars, people who would have run for office regardless of the zeitgeist. They grew up in a tightly knit neighborhood, went to the local college, and never lost touch with the friends they had known down the street. They join the clubs, play the games, and root for the teams their fathers did.

On the other side are legislators whose political interests have little to do with locality. Their map is national, not neighborly. The issues that drove men like Tim Wirth of Colorado, Ed Markey of Massachusetts, Bob Carr of Michigan, and Phil Sharp of Indiana to run for Congress were Vietnam and civil rights. They were romantics about politics, and they wrote their own rules. Where the regulars stayed close to home politically, they networked. Where the old crowd stuck together regardless of the issue at hand, they made their deals the way their friends do on Wall Street.

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The division is more cultural than generational. Attitude, not age, is what sets the New Breed apart. The person most responsible for the changing culture of Congress: John F. Kennedy. Imagine, for a moment, JFK's impact on those growing up in the early 1960s. He was the first to demonstrate that politics was not an indoor sport, but a glamorous competition practiced before enthusiastic crowds. Politics was an adventurous, not a custodial, career. The real arena was the TV tube. That's where the dashing young man slew the nerdy Nixon in the great debates, where he inspired the nation to "Ask not . . ."

Most important, JFK's career showcased the success of independence. Kennedy had run successfully for Congress by bucking the local mayor, had taken his Senate seat from a pillar of the establishment, Henry Cabot Lodge, and his party's presidential nomination from Johnson and Humphrey, the Capitol Hill insiders. Rather than "wait his turn," he had made the others do the waiting. He had not only beaten the old guard, he had beaten them *young*.

It was Richard Nixon's scandal that opened this "brief shining moment" to others. In 1974 Tom Downey won election in an upscale, regularly Republican part of Long Island. Robert Edgar, a young anti-war chaplain at Drexel University, won in a district in the Philadelphia suburbs that had been electing Republicans for generations. Tim Wirth, who had gotten his Ph.D. at Stanford only the year before, pulled a similar feat outside Denver. Few of these people had held office before, and those who had were renegades. Ed Markey had fought so hard with the Speaker of the Great and General Court of Massachusetts over judicial reform that his desk had been moved out into the hallway. Typically, Markey turned his punishment to his advantage at the polls. Running for Congress in 1976, the young assemblyman's TV ads showed him working at his desk, right there in the statehouse corridor. "The bosses can tell Ed Markey where to sit," proclaimed the voice-over, "nobody tells him where to stand."

These candidates sold themselves Kennedy-style, on television, without owing the local political machine a thing. While they shook hands and hit the shopping malls, they were selling themselves, not the number of local endorsements they had picked up. Even the least rebellious of the New Breed would remember this. When a skeptical reporter questioned Representative Richard Gephardt's ties to Tip O'Neill, he would say without a trace of vanity, "There's *nothing* the leadership can do for me."

To outward appearances, the New Breed began 1987 poised to grab the upper hand on Capitol Hill. Where calls for high-tech education and Japanese-style competitiveness had once been the domain of the Atari Democrats alone, now the entire caucus was sounding the theme. Given the New Breed's enhanced visibility and seniority, it was simply a case of putting their new policy-making authority to work. But the nastiness of the Aspin affair offers an admonition. The congressional Old Breed still retains some wicked firepower, strong enough to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

publicly mortify the sitting chairman of a major committee.

The truth is, Congress retains a good many members, of all ages, who resent the way the new crowd plays the game. They don't like colleagues who move with an air of intellectual inquiry but refuse to give them the time of day, who rather than standing with their party take the maverick's approach to every roll call. To them, the ways of the New Breed are a threat not just to the party but to the values of their upbringing. To tolerate a Les Aspin is to trample on their deepest political emotion: personal loyalty.

THE ROOTS of this enmity grow deep. Two years ago Aspin led a contingent of reform-minded House Democrats in unseating Melvin Price, the 80-year-old chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. To some, it was a case of political euthanasia. Price had refused to step down, even though he was too enfeebled to talk in his own defense. To others, it was patricide. Denying the old chairman one last term was a classic case of youthful ingratitude.

From either view, the coup was seen as epochal. The Old Breed had been routed. At last the House would awake from the barbiturate of "bipartisanship" administered so painlessly by the back-slapping Joint Chiefs, to fill its constitutional role of strategic vigilance and Pentagon oversight. In dethroning Price, the House had spilled some blood of its own. A chairman, even a doddering one, had been humiliated. He was made to stand on the floor of the House, robbed not just of his chairmanship, but of his own dignity. For better or worse, there would be no going back.

Given the means of Aspin's accession, the events of January 1987 might be viewed as a simple matter of poetic justice. Actually, they derive from Aspin's behavior *after* his investiture as Armed Services chairman. He became the target of a countercoup not for how he gained power, but for how he used it. He was a chairman that only the most avant-garde New Breeder could love.

Where the Old Breeder rose to power by "marrying" somewhat higher up, Aspin rose by rebelling. As far as long-term political relations are concerned, he is a confirmed bachelor. The regular knows the importance of seeking the favor of those above him; Aspin asks nothing and accepts nothing from his elders. In 1981 he declared in a newsletter to his constituents that Speaker Tip O'Neill was "in a fog." He never publicly retracted the remark, even when O'Neill's resurgent leadership touch and enhanced popularity would have made such a gesture not only gracious but politic. Such flippancy nevertheless sent a message: here was one hotshot who would not be found fraternizing with either the Pentagon brass or its contractors.

Unfortunately for Aspin, his irreverence was not limited to the tweaking of those in high places. His breaches of old-line political etiquette were only the preamble to far broader transgressions. Elected chairman with the votes of arms controls zealots, he quickly sided with supporters of the MX missile. Having promoted himself through years of press releases as a Pentagon cost-cutter, he undermined the work of the procurement reformers by conceding higher spending totals than those approved by his colleagues. The man who campaigned to make the Armed Services Committee more responsive to the Democratic caucus crossed over to vote with the Republicans on aid to the Nicaraguan *contras*. These shifts might be explained as part of a broad ideological swing or as a flirtation with the neoconservatives. Since Aspin usually moved alone and in silence, his critics would choose the most heinous motive. The big question is not why Les Aspin took some hard lashes this January, but why he was not drawn and quartered.

Part of the answer is personality. Aspin is not only a smart rascal. He is a charming one. He is the latter-day political equivalent of the outrageously seductive Long John Silver. A corsair, he leaves port with one crew and arrives back with another. He led a mutiny in 1985, but having grabbed the helm, he betrayed his comrades, made league with the enemy, and pirated the treasure. Later, when he is apprehended, he charges his way back to our good graces, using self-denigration as his weapon. "Come on, you guys. Give me a break, why doncha!" The same breeziness that permits him to drift from one side of an issue to another makes him hard to blame, at least for long. Like young Jim Hawkins in *Treasure Island*, we end up handing old Long John the pistol. Aspin's greatest gift, even beyond his highly developed mind, is a gypsy ability to beguile his adversaries, even as they try to punish him. His worst treasons are finally forgiven because the Aspin irreverence is most of all directed at himself.

THERE IS more at work here than charm. The people who ultimately renominated Les Aspin as Armed Services chairman last month obviously find his performance, if not admirable, at least tolerable. The fact that they could invest so much authority in a man of such brazen independence suggests how far the New Breed mentality has progressed on Capitol Hill. Aspin did not become a hero of the new crowd by accident. At his best he is the kind of braintruster congressional Democrats have long needed in strategic policy-making. At his worst he is the class cut-up. His idiosyncrasies, after all, personify the New Breed style so many of his younger peers aspire to.

But the war is far from over. The events of January prove that the Old Breed and their young cohorts view the political manner of Les Aspin with palpable hostility. Loyalists like Marty Russo of Illinois, who led the charge against Aspin, question the integrity of the new political networkers. They believe that the system works because each new generation wins its chance not by toppling those who came before, but by grabbing the flag before it falls. They detest the values of those who strike new deals and new coalitions for each new fight. As the '80s become the '90s and those in their 40s move into their 50s, the change and the resentment will continue. The old rules die hard. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Women in Pairs

Is it coincidence? Or an augury? Two films arrive in which standard formulas, long used for two leading males, are reworked for two leading females.

Outrageous Fortune is a farce-thriller written by a woman, a newcomer named Leslie Dixon, who has proclaimed her love of Hollywood films, past and present, and proves it with her first produced script. Dixon heads straight for the "realistic" never-never land where Hollywood's farces and many of its thrillers are set. After dabbing in some veristic background, she launches from the credible base into the entertainingly incredible. A few days before I saw *Outrageous Fortune* I saw again one of the "classic" Hollywood farces—or screwball comedies, as they were called—*Nothing Sacred* (1937); and Ben Hecht's script has the same pattern. *Nothing Sacred* is still funny, and *Outrageous Fortune*, applying that pattern to a wacky spy story, is pretty funny, too. Its singularity is that, in character terms, it's a buddy picture and the two buddies are women.

Outrageous Fortune
(Buena Vista)
Black Widow
(20th Century-Fox)
Waiting for the Moon
(Skouras)

They are played—smashingly—by Shelley Long and Bette Midler. Long is a serious New York acting student, with well-to-do parents, who has taken her fencing and ballet lessons and is now admitted to the class of a Polish acting guru. Midler, zippy and less than couth, has been in porno films and, for some flimsy reason, is also admitted—on a scholarship. (Long paid $5,000.) The two women quarrel from the start. They quarrel even more when they find out that they are both sleeping with the same man. He says he is a schoolteacher. After a bomb blast in a florist shop, they find out he is something else. Their quarrels are eventually submerged in a Communist spy chase that winds around New York and ends in the New Mexico desert.

The politics are pure comic-strip, like the action. All that matters is whether the picture entertains; and it does. Dixon has gone past reversals of gender to reversals of situation. For instance, in the desert at night, a helicopter comes along with a searchlight; Long and Midler, caught in a tight situation, instead of trying to hide from the beam as people have done in a zillion previous pictures, try desperately to get into the light. Besides, Dixon has a gift for dialogue that uses standard wisecrack rhythms for contemporary zingers.

Long, who *is* long and also pretty, is deceptively gentle: when she is cornered, she can punch. As a hooker in *Night Shift*, she was exceptionally appealing; she's no less so here, and adds the ability to do pratfall comedy. Midler is a diamond pretending to be a rhinestone. She gives me the uncanny, doubtless wild impression that she is a Brechtian, epic actor—at least in the sense that she seems to be acting in quotation marks. An intelligent, talented woman *presents* a brassy character, with sympathy and sparkle.

Arthur Hiller, a director from whom little was to be expected—the only film of his I've liked was *The Hospital*—whips the plot along with pace and relish. Accept the premise, not only of the plot but of the whole film's reason for being, and it's enjoyable.

Black Widow is a thriller, non-farcical, about a government agent tracking a multiple murderer who is clever enough to conceal the fact that the murders were even committed. Both the agent and the murderer are women. (I'm tipping nothing: the murderer is identified a minute after the film starts.) The script by Ronald Bass in ingenious, if once again you cede credibility in exchange for entertainment, and Bass writes sharp, show-biz dialogue. Like all good suspense writers, he gives each of his minor people a characteristic or two so that they won't glide past like figures on an old tower clock; and he also tries to give his two leading women some ambiguities to take them out of stock types into individuality.

To some extent he succeeds, but he is helped enormously by his colleagues. John Bloom, the editor, keeps the film lithe, invitingly impatient. Conrad Hall, one of the best American cinematographers, has never been better. Note how he lays quite natural yet highly appropriate masks of shadow across faces from time to time. Bob Rafelson directs adroitly and with all the insight that this whiz-bang script permits. Rafelson, whose career has wobbled disappointingly and artily since *Five Easy Pieces*, opts here for the straight commercial route, never a barren route if the director knows how to travel it. He does. More, he helps his two women find all the complexity possible in their roles.

Debra Winger is the agent, a member of a Department of Justice Special Task Force. She persuades us briskly of her womanliness and her obsession with this case. Theresa Russell, both icy and sexy, is the marrying murderer who finds se-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Crimes of the Heart. Three strange, seemingly comic Mississippi sisters, well drawn by Beth Henley (from her play), two of them well acted by Jessica Lange and Sissy Spacek. (Reviewed 2/2/87)

The Good Father. Anthony Hopkins, bitter and confused, as a Londoner separated from wife and child, vents spleen through another man's legal action about similar troubles. (2/9/87)

Platoon. What happened in Southeast Asia after the Vietnam War gives this grim film about Vietnam combat even more grimness. Made excellently by Oliver Stone, who was there. (1/19/87)

Thérèse. A religious work comparable to the best of Robert Bresson. Alain Cavalier's biography of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux is spare in manner, rich in beauty. (12/29/86)

SK

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

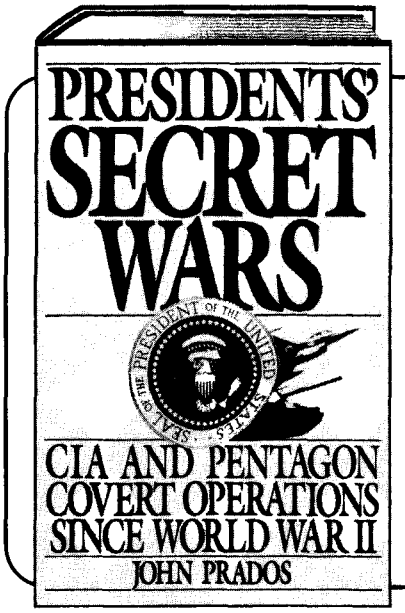
cret ways to kill her rich husbands. Underlying the story is a psychological bond, one that's familiar from Hugo and Dostoyevsky, between the pursuer and the pursued. The case leads from New York to Texas to Hawaii, and in every encounter between the two women Rafelson brings out much that is unspoken. The film flirts with homoeroticism between these two patently heterosexual women. (The matter is complicated by the fact that in time they both sleep with the same man.) Helped by the good acting of Winger and Russell, Rafelson adds a sexual counterpoint to the antagonism/linkage in the detective story.

Also concerned with two women but obviously different in provenance and purpose is *Waiting for the Moon*, a film about Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas. Jill Godmilow, previously associated with documentaries, including the memorable *Antonia*, directed; Mark Magill, a video artist, wrote the script; and from the casting on, we are signaled that verisimilitude is not the aim. Very soon it's clear that facts of the two women's lives, and of others', have been scrambled. The time of the Spanish Civil War and of Guillaume Apollinaire's death are only two of the elements that have been used as Godmilow and Magill pleased.

This collage idea, like all unconventional actions in art, would be successful if it succeeded. We get a series of episodes with Stein and Toklas—reading proofs in the country, entertaining in the rue de Fleurus, rescuing Hemingway from a brothel, and more—all of them ended elliptically, all intended as parts of an understated yet baroque mosaic. Apparently the structure is meant to be mimetic of Stein's style; but within each episode the dialogue is conventional and clear, with only the data jumbled. This description doesn't fit most of Stein's prose and poetry.

The casting is painful. Linda Bassett looks a bit like Stein but has very little of the vigor conveyed in her writing and the writing about her. One famous photograph of Stein shows her merrily singing "On the Trail of the Lonesome Pine"—a favorite song that figures in the film. It's impossible to imagine Bassett in that vein. As Toklas, the diminutive Linda Hunt shows more courage than accomplishment. Hunt has ability, even charm, but she offers little suggestion of what we know of Toklas or

The book that explains today's headlines



"Recent debacles in Nicaragua and Iran make this chronicle of U.S. secret-warriorship especially timely. . . . Prados is to be congratulated for writing dispassionately about a subject that more usually stirs strong emotion and polarized argument." —Edwin M. Yoder, Jr., *The Washington Post Book World*

"Important . . . enlightening." —Sanford J. Ungar, *The New York Times Book Review*

For the past forty years, government officials have run secret operations through the CIA, the National Security Council, and the Pentagon—from abortive rebellions in Eastern Europe to the funding of Nicaraguan *contras*. After you read today's newspaper, read this book. It is destined to become a landmark in foreign policy.

William Morrow

© Winners of the 1986/87

NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARDS

Fiction
Reynolds Price
KATE VAIDEN
Atheneum

General Nonfiction
John W. Dower
WAR WITHOUT MERCY:
Race and Power in the Pacific War
Pantheon

Biography
Theodore Rosengarten
TOMBEE:
Portrait of a Cotton Planter
Morrow

Criticism
Joseph Brodsky
LESS THAN ONE:
Selected Essays
Farrar, Straus & Giroux

Poetry
Edward Hirsch
WILD GRATITUDE
Knopf

The NBCC Citation for Excellence in Reviewing
Richard Eder

The National Book Critics Circle, founded in 1974, is a nonprofit organization of over 500 professional book critics and book review editors across the country. The NBCC's purpose is to raise the standards of the profession of book criticism and to enhance public appreciation of literature.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of what Toklas supplied to that chemical combination. We get a large woman and a small woman photographed in a series of tortuously aphoristic dialogues. Not much insight or feeling of any kind.

One possible rationale for the film: it is "told" by Toklas with her connecting voice-over narration. Toklas's so-called autobiography was written by Stein. Maybe this film is belated compensation.

POSITIVELY EIGHTH STREET

The Collected Essays and Criticism: Perceptions and Judgments, 1939-1944 by Clement Greenberg edited by John O'Brian

(University of Chicago Press, 270 pp., $27.50)

The Collected Essays and Criticism: Arrogant Purpose, 1945-1949 by Clement Greenberg edited by John O'Brian

(University of Chicago Press, 353 pp., $27.50)

Like a veteran actor who always plays the same role but keeps audiences coming back because they love his dependable performance, the American art critic Clement Greenberg has been writing about modern art for decades and holding readers through the fierce simplicity of his one-track line of thought. The scenery changes, the cast changes, but Greenberg is still insisting, as he was back in 1940, when he was 31 years old, that in modern times the arts "have been hunted back to their mediums, and there they have been isolated, concentrated and defined." Greenberg doesn't really care whether modern painting incorporates images we know from the world (as in Matisse) or turns completely abstract (as in Kandinsky). What makes modern art modern is the demotion to a secondary role of subject matter, literary allusion, and the artist's feelings about the world. Greenberg's writing has a lucidity probably without parallel in modern critical thought about art. Roger Fry and a few other Europeans may have foreshadowed his sense of things; but it was apparently only in America that one could achieve the distance necessary to see the history of modern art from Monet to Mondrian as one unified, unbroken development.

The prehistory of Greenberg's ideas may be traced back to the mid-19th century criticism of Baudelaire, who wrote about the qualities of color and paint and, Greenberg observed, "was one of the first to foretaste abstract art." Greenberg also owes a good deal to the writings of early 20th-century artists—such as Paul Klee's "Creative Credo" (1920), in which "the very nature of graphic art lures us to abstraction." With Greenberg and the artists of his generation, though, abstraction (or an art that, like Picasso's, approaches abstraction) isn't any longer something absolutely new and tasting of utopia. Abstraction is a fact of life that they've grown up with and known on fairly easy terms. As Meyer Schapiro, whose early essays had a deep influence on Greenberg, wrote in 1937: "In abstract art . . . the pretended autonomy and absoluteness of the aesthetic emerged in a concrete form. Here, finally, was an art of painting in which only aesthetic elements seem to be present." That "seem," which left open the possibility of something else, something more, is a doubt Greenberg chooses to erase.

Toward the end of the 1930s Greenberg began to follow the work of the young painters who congregated on Eighth Street in Greenwich Village, and was introduced by Harold Rosenberg and Lionel Abel to the group of equally young writers around *Partisan Review*. For a decade he immersed himself in New York's downtown art and literary scene. He reported, for the left-leaning readership of the *Nation* and *Partisan Review*, on the early work of the abstract expressionists, as well as on all other manner of contemporary art and literature. This period of Greenberg's career is the subject of the first two volumes of his *Collected Essays and Criticism*, which have been beautifully edited by John O'Brian, who tells us that Greenberg (though he didn't have a hand in shaping the collection) "responded favorably to the idea of a 'Collected Works,' and encouraged the endeavor throughout." (The edition will ultimately cover Greenberg's work through 1969.)

These two volumes track the 1940s through an omnium-gatherum of periodical prose, and they reflect a more generally inquisitive figure than we know from later years. The record unwinds, week after week; and one follows, in much the way one would the only partially premeditated rhythms of a journal or a cycle of letters. There are essays on Yiddish humor, on the anti-fascist novels of Anna Seghers, on the necessity of socialist democracies in order to defeat Hitler, as well as on the Whitney annuals, the cartoons of Steig and Thurber, the shows of De Kooning and Pollock, and the opening of Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century Gallery, with its surrealist decor by Frederick Kiesler. Much of Greenberg's most interesting writing here is about contemporary art, but he rises to many different occasions. He's a practicing critic, adjusting his sights to whatever is at hand.

The '40s in New York: this was a setting and a subject at which Greenberg arrived, like so many Jews of his time, after a childhood and youth spent in the outlying boroughs. He was born in 1909, in the Bronx, into a family of "free-thinking socialists." According to O'Brian, "Their culture included Italian opera and Russian novels; at home they spoke Yiddish for a long while." Greenberg's father was successively and successfully a storekeeper, a manufacturer, a wholesaler. The boy attended high school in Brooklyn, took life-drawing classes at the Art Students League in Manhattan, went to Syracuse University in 1926. By the late '30s he'd worked for his father, done translations from German, read a good deal of philosophy, married, had a son, divorced, and taken a job working at the U.S. Customs Service. In 1939 Greenberg wrote his first piece for *Partisan Review*. He became an editor at *PR* the following year, and the *Nation*'s regular art critic in 1942.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Though America had had a period of modernist experimentation in the '20s, the art and literature that had first appeared in the *Dial* and in Alfred Stieglitz's galleries seemed pretty much irrelevant to the artists and writers who were coming up in the '40s. The Depression and the war made a rift, a separation of generations. In 1942 Greenberg remarked of Stieglitz that his "services to American art are inestimable, and he is one of the best photographers there have been, but for all that there is about him and his disciples too much art with a capital A, and too many of the swans in his park are only geese." The American modern art of the '20s was a backwater, too little connected to the main currents of Europe. In Alfred Kazin's memoirs of the '40s, the creativity of the Jews around *Partisan Review* seems "to arise out of a historic tension between whole traditions and systems of ideas." The period was full of famously conflicting or peculiarly interlocking attachments—to art and politics, to the School of Paris and left-wing thought. In 1939 Marx was someone Greenberg believed we needed to quote "word for word." Twenty years later, in the beautiful essay "The Late Thirties in New York," he summarizes the history of his youth by saying that "'anti-Stalinism,' which started out more or less as 'Trotskyism,' turned into art for art's sake, and thereby cleared the way, heroically, for what was to come."

Though modern art was still not quite an establishment taste, it already had a glorious past. Matisse was in his 70s, Picasso in his 60s; abstraction had been born a generation and more before. In the first years of his career, Greenberg wrote obituaries of Kandinsky, Klee, and Mondrian. Downtown—where, by the late '30s, Greenberg had already heard Hans Hofmann lecture and met Arshile Gorky, De Kooning, and Lee Krasner—the central debate was over the meaning of this rapidly aging thing called modern art. What were its essential characteristics? And beyond that, was one now going to work within it, or initiate a break with Paris that was as radical as cubism's had been with the century before? In Greenberg's telling, Europe was fading fast: Braque, Kandinsky, Klee, Miró, Mondrian, Picasso had all bloomed in youth and early middle age, and then gone into a series of demoralizing aesthetic declines.

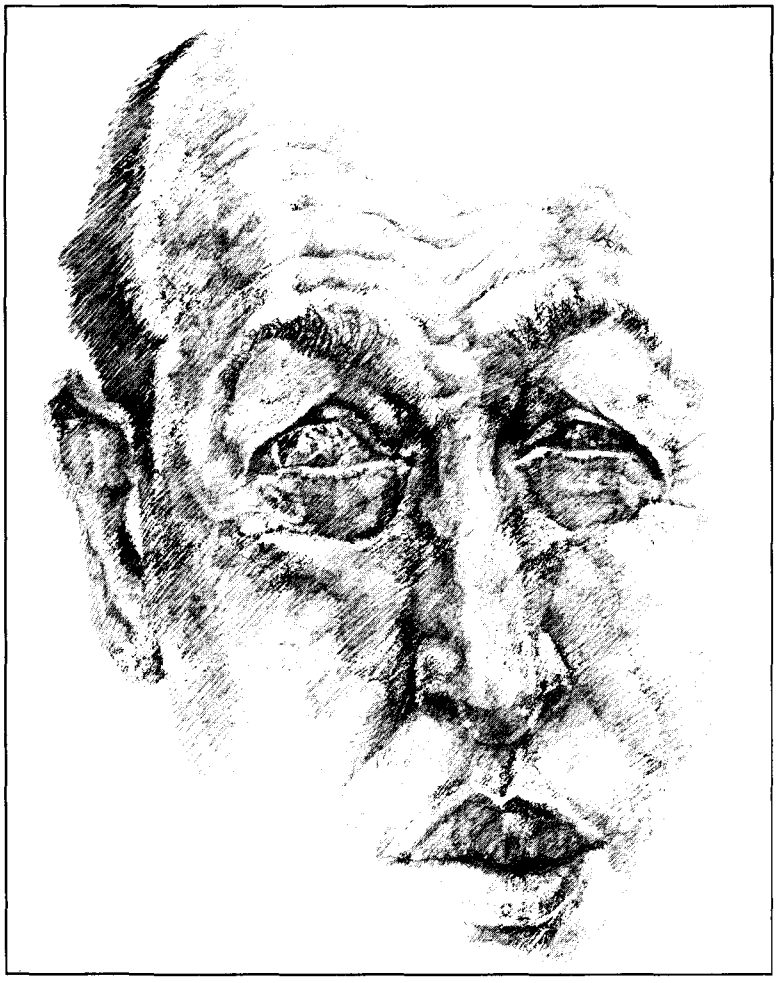
Greenberg went to Europe for the first time in 1939. Though he's never written about his experiences there, it happens that the first volume of these essays carries as a frontispiece a fairly revealing document of the critic as Innocent Abroad. It's the closing page of a letter Greenberg sent his family from Paris, and contains a laundry list of literary engagements:

> I met Georges Hugnet, the Surrealist poet whose stuff I admire, and am to meet Virgil Thompson [sic] and Jean-Paul Sartre, the novelist. And Friday I'm to go out to Paul Eluard's home in the country.
>
> —I'm ending here in order to get this in the mail.

Below, filling most of the page, Greenberg draws a jaunty view of what's probably the scene from his hotel window. The signs along the street—"Teinturerie," "Livres," "Hotel"—are like a little allegory of the Capital of the 19th century; and the graphic style, which is a matter of tilted, drunken planes, has the delirious effect of a Soutine. This is the letter of a young man who's bowled over by what he's seeing and whom he's meeting.

And yet in what Greenberg later writes he'll rarely acknowledge the dazzle of European culture. He will regard Europe with the eyes of a Jew who has written about Yiddish literature and Kafka and knows the Holocaust has dropped a final curtain on the halcyon days of modern culture. Everything over there is melancholy; it's all running down. In the late '40s Greenberg wrote an essay-length book on Miró and remarked that

> Miró's hedonism, coming later [than Picasso's or Matisse's], on the downslope of the age that rose so hopefully in 1900, is narrower, pessimistic, irresolute and less serious. . . . Miró's hedonism, like that of the post-1918 avant-garde's in general, *rescues* pleasure; the original hedonism of the School of Paris, which belonged to Enlightenment's last and most triumphant period, *installed* pleasure.



DRAWING BY DAVID SCHORR FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Greenberg knew he was witnessing the end of an age. In the fall of 1939, when, on his return from Europe, *Partisan Review* published "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," an essay he'd actually written before he left New York, it sounded like a farewell to the Old World he'd only just encountered firsthand. "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" is a dark-clouds-over-Europe vision; its tragic mood recalls some of Walter Benjamin's essays of the 1930s. The connection is in the awareness that political upheavals in Russia, Germany, Italy, and Spain are bringing about a homogenized and depersonalized culture, which may well swamp all that's left of the gloriously

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

free spirit of the art of the beginning of the century. Greenberg begins "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" by declaring that "one and the same civilization produces simultaneously two such different things as a poem by T. S. Eliot and a Tin Pan Alley song, or a painting by Braque and a *Saturday Evening Post* cover." And yet he sees no common ground from which one can judge these products of modern civilization. Kitsch, which is a creation of industrialized society,

> operates by formulas. Kitsch is vicarious experience and faked sensations. . . . The precondition for kitsch, a condition without which kitsch would be impossible, is the availability close at hand of a fully matured cultural tradition. . . . [Kitsch] draws its life blood, so to speak, from this reservoir of accumulated experience.

By the last quarter of the 19th century this reservoir had pretty much dried up, and the most important artists were retreating into their own, private worlds:

> Retiring from public altogether, the avant-garde poet or artist sought to maintain the high level of his art by both narrowing and raising it to the expression of an absolute in which all relativities and contradictions would be either resolved or beside the point. "Art for art's sake" and "pure poetry" appear, and subject matter or content becomes something to be avoided like a plague.

As Greenberg sees it, there's trouble everywhere. Avant-garde culture must avoid the prepackaged emotions of late commercial civilization, which are kitsch. But it must also guard itself against "a motionless Alexandrianism, an academicism in which the really important issues are left untouched because they involve controversy." To avoid Alexandrianism is especially difficult, since avant-garde culture, which is a meditation on earlier culture, contains within itself some of the very Alexandrianism it seeks to overcome. The difference is that "the avant-garde moves, while Alexandrianism stands still."

Greenberg's essay was extraordinarily severe. In the '30s many Europeans, especially among the surrealists, had thrown themselves into an elaborate flirtation with kitsch and popular culture—and this flirtation had a long and honorable history, going back to Manet's involvement with the popular vogues for Japonisme and things Spanish, to Seurat's fascination with circus posters, to the jokey scraps of café life that filtered into the cubist paintings, and to the trash of the Moroccan bazaar that preoccupied Matisse in the 1920s. Greenberg won't have any of this. For him, popular culture is a disease, to be removed with his beautiful analytic tools. When Greenberg comes to write about collage, with its bits of imitation wood grain and newspaper typography, he speaks about it entirely in terms of a solution to certain problems of space in cubist composition.

GREENBERG had the avant-gardist's proper distaste for uptown. He saw most of the art shown on 57th Street in the 1940s as pure kitsch—fake art ratified by fake taste. Still, in the years after he began reviewing art regularly, Greenberg devoted considerable space to the uptown scene, and a good deal of heat was generated in the writing by his willingness to confront work that failed by his exacting standards. Uptown, Greenberg liked to go after what was fashionable: academic surrealism, neoromantic painting, and a tendency toward the theatrical, which he saw in some of the best as well as the worst art and called neo-baroque. The uptown gambit was to give historical styles a vaguely modernized, frothed-up look. This art was connected to the worlds of dress design and ballet.

Greenberg diagnosed a disastrous crossover from art into style, and the grinding of the valuable part of modernism down into "mode." The problem with Pavel Tchelitchew, reviewed at the time of his 1942 Museum of Modern Art retrospective, is that "in essence his work is a vulgarized documentation of most of the fashions in advanced painting since 1920." Greenberg discriminates, though, between the junk of Tchelitchew and Eugene Berman and the larger aims of de Chirico—who, even when he disgraces himself in Greenberg's eyes, creates art that's in some way authentic. Greenberg gets at the poignancy of the later de Chirico; even as he damns it he demonstrates what others can admire:

> Negligible as this stuff is at its best and symptomatic as it may be of a real degeneration and of an impotence to react cogently to modern life, still it has some reality as a gloss on the history of painting, an illustrated lecture on the ABC's of baroque painting. Irrelevant as painting inside painting, it is sheer cultural evidence, a kind of funeral oration more affecting than anything that could be put into words.

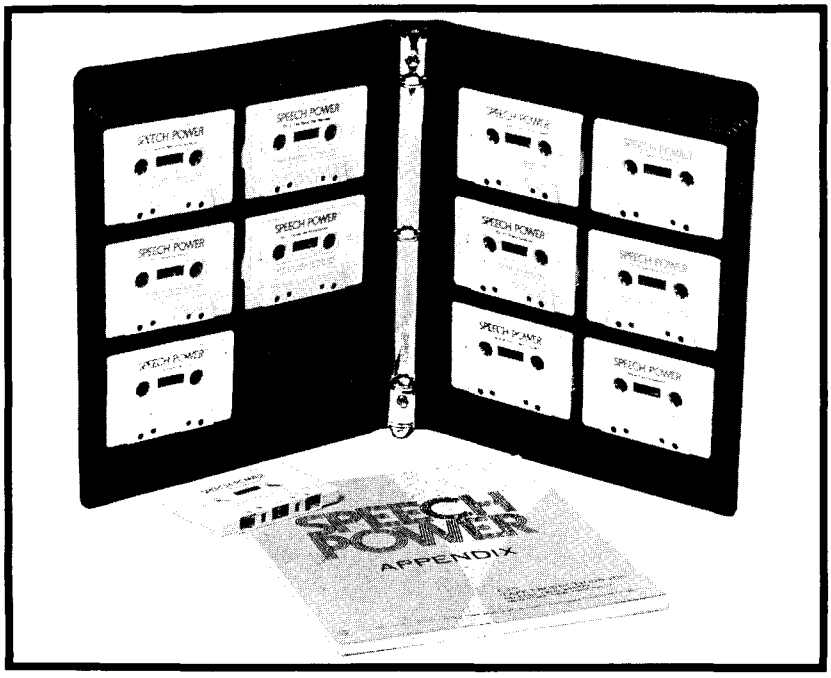
One appreciates here the weight of words and phrases: "modern life," "reality," "sheer cultural evidence" convey the cramped largeness of the Italian's mind. De Chirico offers "a stereopticon view of a desolation clean-swept and orderly, haunted, abandoned, Graeco-Italian."

The violence of the downtowner's view of uptown blows sky high only once in Greenberg's account of the 1940s, but this instance is interesting, for it makes explicit the reproach against the luxury of uptown art that winds through Greenberg's union of *Partisan Review* radicalism and Eighth Street art style. (Mary McCarthy, who covered theater for *Partisan Review*, later said of the magazine's contributors that "we automatically suspected any commercial success, any succès d'estime.") In 1945, Greenberg took the odd step of writing a solitary piece about ballet—about Anthony Tudor's *Dim Luster*, which wasn't even included in Ballet Theater's current season. He wants us to know that he knows why Ballet Theater isn't doing *Dim Luster*. Here the complaint against the neoromantics (against "an effect, a wonderful-rich effect, but it belongs to journalism and mode") is turned into social criticism.

Dim Luster (which comes out of the same cozily melancholy period style as the paintings of Tchelitchew and Berman—they did ballet sets) is said by Greenberg to be a ballet on the theme of narcissism. The dancing couples dream only of the partners they aren't dancing with—they revel in their self-absorption. The absence of *Dim Luster* from repertory is a cover-up. Of what? "The tendency toward the homosexualization of all sex in our society. . . . What is involved is not simply homosexuality as such but the devaluation of love and sexual relations in general." The great dance critic Edwin Denby, writing for the *New York Herald Tribune* in 1943, had a different view. For him *Dim Luster* is "weaker than any of [Tudor's] others"—a statement that may account for its not being revived. The theme of the ballet is to be found in the "slight touch of bitterness" that comes with "accepting an unsatisfactory reality, since it is expected of you." Greenberg colors everything much more highly, and sees a sort of allegory of the Two Ways of Life. One is highbrow, serious, heterosexual; the other is escapist, decadent, gay. This luridly apocalyptic vision hints at the ugly side of Greenberg, at the ponderous moralist who closes off all too many things.

HANS HOFMANN, who was a generation older than most of the downtown artists of his time, seems to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Learn the art of sparkling conversation and never be at a loss for words again

SPEECH POWER

Did you ever notice that some people always know the right thing to say in social and business situations? They're popular, they're humorous; people seek them out at business and social gatherings because they're fun to be with.

Now you can command the same kind of influence that helps people hold the attention of others . . . obtain the business they want because they can persuade people about themselves. In just 12 half-hour Speech Power lessons, you'll learn how to:

- Create icebreakers for every conversational situation
- Gracefully hold your own in debate or conversation
- Skillfully employ humor in your conversation
- Eliminate undesirable expressions from your speech

This uniquely effective program dramatizes real-life situations and lets you listen to the speech of famous personalities to show you how to quickly break through the barriers to effective communication. Here are the key sections to this exciting, entertaining, self-improvement course:

1. Speech: Mirror of the Mind
2. The Great Human Achievement
3. The Pause that Repulses
4. Speak Up
5. Breaking the Ice
6. Everyday Talking
7. Formal and Polite Speech
8. Telephone Speech
9. The Speech of Love
10. Vocabulary
11. Those Foreign Words!
12. Four-Letter Words and Slang
13. Dialects and Standard Speech
14. The Power of Humor
15. The Art of Listening
16. Body Speech
17. Public Speaking
18. Persuasive Speech
19. Debates and Arguments
20. Misleading Speech: Speech and the Law
21. Character and Culture in Speech
22. When to Stop Talking

(Each chapter is self-contained so that you can concentrate on subjects in any order you prefer.)

Course Contents:
Twelve Audiocassettes
Looseleaf Workbook
Price $99.95

learn INCORPORATED Dept. CZ-32, 113 Gaither Drive, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054-9987

Please send me Speech Power at the special price of $99.95 plus $6 postage and handling.

If I'm not completely satisfied, I can return it in its original condition within 15 days for a full refund. No questions asked.

Check the method of payment below: NJ Residents add 6% sales tax.

☐ Check or money order enclosed (payable to Learn Incorporated)

☐ Charge my credit card ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

Card #_____ Exp. Date_____

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Signature_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have epitomized for Greenberg all that was hopeful in the art scene of the 1940s. Known first as a great teacher, and more and more by the middle of the decade as a painter of originality, Hofmann may be the only artist Greenberg has ever felt to be his intellectual equal: there's that quality of unexpected humility in his words. Greenberg acknowledged the debt to Hofmann as early as "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," and in 1961, when he published a tiny book on Hofmann, he ended with almost abject praise for the older man's late-blooming career. "Hofmann offers a lesson in patience. That lesson, from him and from others, I shall never finish learning. It includes one's own mistakes. One is reminded of how in art the tortoise so often overtakes the hare."

Hofmann was a European, but unlike the many artists who just spent the war years here he embraced America, became a kind of American. It was here that he found himself as a painter and, for Greenberg, became emblematic of the age. Hofmann was the one who completed the journey from the School of Paris to the School of New York. He rejected geometry and surrealism, the two prevailing dogmas of European abstract art. His teachings, with their emphasis on the reality of "painting inside painting," helped Greenberg to define abstract expressionism—which he called " 'American-type' painting"—as an intensification of the pictorial hedonism of the School of Paris. The Hofmanns of the mid-'40s are medium-sized easel paintings that suggest, through their hot-and-cold color and their drizzled and splashed paint, a stormy-weather moodiness or alcoholic intoxication. Hofmann had said that "whether the artist works directly from nature, from memory, or from fantasy, nature is always the source of his creative impulse," and his 1940s paintings are nature studies without the trees and clouds. Hofmann's painting, according to Greenberg in 1945,

> is all painting; none of it is publicity, mode, or literature. It deals with the crucial problems of contemporary painting on its highest level in the most radical and uncompromising way, asserting that painting exists first of all in its medium and must there resolve itself before going on to do anything else.

Greenberg made these comments about Hofmann two weeks after reviewing a Mondrian show at the Museum of Modern Art, and there's a very telling shift in tone and attitude between the two reviews. Greenberg likes not only Hofmann's paintings but also his teaching, which has "grasped the issues at stake better than did Roger Fry and better than Mondrian, Kandinsky, Lhote, Ozenfant, and all the others who have tried to 'explicate' the recent revolution in painting." Mondrian, though a great artist whose pictures are "islands radiating clarity, harmony and grandeur—passion mastered and cooled," troubles Greenberg with his insistence on some *idea* that will propel painting forward:

> Acquaintance with Mondrian's theories may expand one's idea but will hardly deepen one's experience of his work. They are real feats of speculative imagination but seem to have been more a rationalization of his practice than a spur to it. Theories were perhaps felt necessary to justify such revolutionary innovations. But Mondrian committed the unforgivable error of asserting that one mode of art, that of pure, abstract relations, would be absolutely superior to all others in the future.

In the 1940 essay "Toward a Newer Laocoon" Greenberg had described modern art in terms of the "necessity of an escape from ideas." "Ideas" are similar to "subject matter," which Greenberg distinguishes from "content"—"in the sense that every work of art must have content, but that subject matter is something the artist does or does not have in mind when he is actually at work." Hofmann's art is subject matter-less, and for Greenberg this is one of its great strengths. It's all painting. The contrast Greenberg draws between Hofmann and Mondrian as theorists of art is central to understanding his view of modern art. Modernism, to Greenberg's mind, has no significant relation to the utopian ideologies and dreams of an alternate reality that inspired so much of the abstraction of Delaunay, Mondrian, Kandinsky, and Klee. Instead, one gets the impression that Greenberg likes best the artist who begins with mundane, take-it-or-leave-it subject matter, as Matisse and Picasso often did. Even Hofmann is attacked for "his private and irrelevant preoccupation with the 'spiritual.' "

WHAT Greenberg will never accept is the possibility that something extrapictorial—a literary or philosophical idea, or the kitsch of commercial civilization, or a sexual feeling for a particular person—can propel the modern artist to create original forms. Greenberg is sometimes right when he condemns the artist, often a surrealist, who "instead of exploring the means of his art in order to produce his subject matter . . . will hunt about for new 'ideas' under which to cover up the failure to develop his means." But Greenberg goes too far. He can't or won't see how an "idea" sometimes moves an artist to "develop his means." This is the case with the French surrealist André Masson, whose nostalgia "has something too literary about it—too many gestures and too much forcing of color, texture, and symbol." A Masson show of 1942 is described as "a *débâcle*, in which there are at the most three acceptable pictures." Still, "There is little of the dull or second-rate about his work."

This odd construction—unacceptable but rarely second-rate—may bespeak Greenberg's discomfort with Masson's elegant calligraphy, with his self-consciously literary themes. The judgment is equally harsh against the figurative sculpture of Giacometti—who was, as it happens, a good friend of Masson's. The slender figures in Giacometti's 1948 show at Pierre Matisse

> constitute nothing more or less than a retreat to the statue, to the monolith. . . . True, these later things are striking in a way—especially the bronze "Tall Figure, Half Size"—but their effect verges on the sentimental, however grimly disguised that sentimentality is, and their conception remains in the end perfunctory.

Masson's work is forced; Giacometti's signals a retreat. That is, these artists don't walk the one-way street on which the critic himself has set out, and which will lead him to the stained cotton duck of Morris Louis and the pale stripes of Kenneth Noland. Greenberg is the rare literary man who bends over backward to avoid the trap of praising the visual arts for their literary or philosophical elements—and one admires him for it. But he sounds a little paranoid as he hunts the arts back to their mediums.

THE RANGE of Greenberg's interests shrinks as he goes on. In the early '40s, he confronts everything, even the cartoons of William Steig, which get "us all down, the whole well-informed class of us who read the liberal magazines, the *New Yorker*, and Modern Library books, and whose hearts are in the right things." But by the end of the decade, he will write sympathetically only about a few artists who navigate the monuments correctly, who carry forward the avant-garde line. One's mind runs through the wonderful things Greenberg passes over (the one-man shows by the American

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

neoplastic painter Burgoyne Diller, or Balthus's appearance at Pierre Matisse in 1948), and yet one is pulled in by the way his essential interests shine through the biweekly grind of getting around to all the galleries and getting the copy in.

The stories of De Kooning and Gorky, and, above all, of Pollock—who pops up in paragraphs here and there—are most movingly told. We hear of Pollock that his art is "genuinely violent and extravagant . . . without losing stylistic control," then of a "major step in his development," and then, in January 1948, of

> "Cathedral"—a matter of much white, less black, and some aluminum paint—[which] reminds one of Picasso's and Braque's masterpieces of the 1912-15 phase of cubism. There is something of the same encasement in a style that, so to speak, feels for the painter and relieves him of the anguish and awkwardness of invention, leaving his gift free to function almost automatically.

How ingenious Greenberg is to say "reminds one"—not me, but one—and thereby to urge the supreme value judgment as a fact, incontestable. And how touching that what he wants us to see in Pollock is the first age of Parisian modernism—the age that "*installed* pleasure." It's as if it were all going to happen again, but this time on Eighth Street.

By the late '40s Greenberg yearned for an art of unity, for a painting that was all-in-one, a glowing surface into which everything—the surrealist motifs, the Jungian ideas, the brooding Melvillean moods, the chaos of urban life—would dissolve. Greenberg's prose in "The Crisis of the Easel Picture," in *Partisan Review* in 1948, is like an incantation, a calling up of the new art:

> This very uniformity, this dissolution of the picture into sheer texture, sheer sensation, into the accumulation of similar units of sensation, seems to answer something deep-seated in contemporary sensibility. It corresponds perhaps to the feeling that all hierarchical distinctions have been exhausted, that no area or order of experience is either intrinsically or relatively superior to any other. It may speak for a monist naturalism that takes all the world for granted and for which there are no longer either first or last things, the only valid distinction being that between the more and the less immediate.

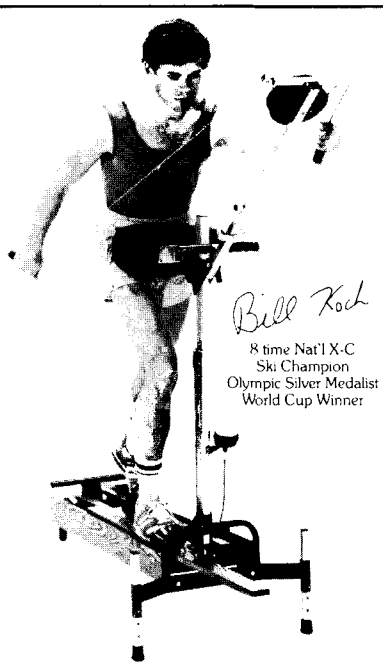
Greenberg first saw this dream of an abstract naturalism fulfilled in the large drip paintings of Pollock—and then, moving toward the '50s, in the even further emptied-out pictures of Clifford Still and Barnett Newman. And it's almost as if, after he had seen these paintings, he had nothing to say. Greenberg resigned as a regular art critic for the *Nation* in 1949. (*Art and Culture*, his only full-length book, published more than a decade later, was dedicated to Margaret Marshall, his editor there.) In the '50s he commented that he'd had

> a belly-full of reviewing in general. . . . Art criticism, I would say, is about the most ungrateful form of "elevated" writing I know of. It may also be one of the most challenging—if only because so few people have done it well enough to be remembered—but I'm not sure the challenge is worth it.

In leaving the *Nation* Greenberg pretty much gave up on the short exhibition review, on the immediate response to events. And this brought to a close the first phase of his career, the phase covered in this initial, two-volume installment of the *Collected Essays and Criticism*.

DESPITE the infrequency with which Greenberg has gone into print in recent decades, his ideas have had a profound effect on many of the dominant—and rival—schools of critical theory about art. The vision of art as progressively shedding its inessentials in a search for the heart of the heart of the medium—a view generally called formalist—has since the '50s influenced thought in almost every major museum and art history department in this country, as well as at many important New York galleries. (It's an idea that has, among other things, sold paintings.) Meanwhile, the Marxist critique of formalism, widely publicized over the past decade, counts among its ranks a number of ex-Greenbergians, and is quite indebted to Greenberg, too—to a reconsideration of his early Marxist writings, as well as those of Meyer Schapiro. Though Greenberg has continued to write inspired essays on individual artists, he's come to be known mostly as a designer of theories and traditions—as the Pope of Modernism.

Greenberg's adventures uptown, and the transformation of his vanguard taste into a form of "mode," is, as they say, another story for another time. Surely many of the virtues that have carried him through the unwinding years are evident in the writing of his first decade. The good sentences, as pared-down as any Pollock; the singular vision, at once admirable and inspiring and off-putting—all this just goes on and on.



Scientific Study Ranks NordicTrack #1

In tests of exercise efficiency at a major university, NordicTrack burned more calories and provided greater aerobic workouts.

Rank of Exercise Efficiency

1. **NordicTrack X-C Ski Exerciser**
2. **An Exercise Bike**
3. **A Rowing Machine**
4. **A Shuffle-Type Ski Exerciser**

NordicTrack's higher oxygen usage test scores show that more muscle mass is involved in the exercise and more calories are being burned.

It's Only Logical that NordicTrack Would Get the Highest Scores

- **because NordicTrack is more complete than an Exercise Bike.**
  Adds important upper body exercise. Provides more uniform leg muscle usage.
- **because NordicTrack is more thorough than a Rowing Machine.**
  NordicTrack's resistance is proportioned according to the individual muscle strength–no major muscles are over-stressed or under-worked.
- **because NordicTrack has inertial resistance not available on a Shuffle-Type Ski Exerciser.**
  Other ski exercisers use less efficient frictional resistance with a resulting calisthenics-like feeling. NordicTrack's unique flywheel resistance for a life-like feeling of smoothness and continuity is matched only by real skiing.

Burns Up To 600 Calories per 20 Minute Workout

Free Brochure, and New Video!

800-328-5888

Minnesota 612-448-6987

NordicTrack

© PSI 1986

141NR Jonathan Blvd. N., Chaska, MN 55318

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What changes is that whereas Greenberg once went to art to discover things, he eventually goes to it only to confirm his prearranged hypotheses. The critic who made his way through the stirring encounters recorded in the first two volumes of the *Collected Essays and Criticism* becomes too thoroughly self-absorbed, too worried about preserving the modernist canon. Greenberg may have had the last word on his own career way back in that first major essay, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," when he said that "the avant-garde moves, while Alexandrianism stands still." Yet Alexandrianism is a risk every canon-builder must take, and Greenberg has by now earned for himself a compliment he gave T. S. Eliot, that greatest of all modern canon-builders: "Even where Eliot is, as I think, wrong, he continues to cast light—more light than most other critics do where they are not wrong."

JED PERL

Jed Perl writes regularly on contemporary art for the *New Criterion* and *Vogue*.

What's wrong with business books.

IACOCC-HEADS

BY JOSEPH NOCERA

IN 1969, as Coca-Cola's longtime chairman Robert Woodruff approached his 80th birthday, the company's executives came up with a novel idea for a present. They decided to give him his biography. To that end, they hired E. J. Kahn of the *New Yorker*, who was well-known in certain corporate circles for his ability to dash off authorized work that made the subject proud to have lived a life of glorious accomplishment. When Kahn had finished, the Coke executives did not hire an agent to shop the book around to publishers. Instead, they simply paid to have it published themselves, and gave it to Woodruff and a select circle of his family and friends. This was called, appropriately enough, vanity publishing. Ah, the good old days.

Here we have two authorized works, autobiographies by An Wang and Akio Morita. They are vain, but they are not published by vanity presses. These days, reputable publishers spend hundreds of thousands of dollars for the privilege of bringing the wit and wisdom of CEOs to the rest of us. There is an understandable commercial reason for this. It's called *Iacocca*. Every publishing house in America seems to be trying to bottle the same magic Bantam Books bottled when it published Lee Iacocca's memoirs.

But there's another reason, too. Along with the rest of America, publishers have belatedly discovered that in this era of raiders and takeover battles and "brilliant" CEOs and 28-year-old Wall Street millionaires (and, more recently, titillating scandal) business is not boring. This is a time when people read the business page for many of the same reasons they read the sports page. A good business story, the world has discovered, is not so much about balance sheets as it is about dreams, egos, relationships, triumphs, and tragedies—in other words, the grist of all good non-fiction. In theory at least, the people who have risen to the top of the business world—particularly those like Wang and Morita, company founders who struggled against the odds, etc., etc., to become inspiring successes—should be able to produce memoirs at least as interesting as those written by actors and ballplayers.

Then why haven't they? Why, in the three years since *Iacocca* went to the top of the charts, has there not been one truly interesting business autobiography? Judging by the evidence at hand, it is certainly not for lack of material. These people *have* lived interesting lives. Take Wang and Morita. Wang grew up in China, and spent the early part of World War II in a nine-square-mile "international zone" in Shanghai; later, he made a daring escape through Japanese lines back into the Chinese interior. Morita started his company—eventually named Sony—out of the rubble of occupied Japan. Wang invented one of the key devices that allowed computers to store information; Morita's company has invented dozens of electronic products that have changed the way we live. Wang Laboratories has spent much of its history bumping up against IBM; the history of Sony is in many ways a history of postwar Japan.

You simply cannot read these two books without sensing that the material for first-rate autobiography exists. But that's precisely the problem. You can only sense it, because that good material finds its way into the books only in the most glancing manner. Much of what is wrong in these corporate autobiographies is peculiar to the genre: the annual-report prose; the insufferable pomposity; the numbing lack of interesting detail; the unacceptably high propaganda quotient. Taken together with the other books under review, they also offer some clues as to why not just business autobiographies but business books in general have been so disappointing—even as they're multiplying like rabbits.

Let's start with Dr. Wang (as we reverently call him in my part of the country). He and his ghost, Eugene Linden, have written the worst—and thus, for our purposes, the most instructive—of the four books. If you were writing a parody of the form, you could lift passages directly from Wang's autobiography, beginning with its title. *Lessons*, it is called. One thing you quickly learn from corporate autobiographies is that people don't become CEOs by accident. While you and I are traipsing mindlessly through life, these brilliant men with steel-trap minds are constantly learning, absorbing, filing away information for that day when it can be used to good advantage. Everything they do in life is a lesson.

Lessons: An Autobiography
by Dr. An Wang with Eugene Linden
(Addison-Wesley, 248 pp., $17.95)

Made In Japan: Akio Morita and Sony
by Akio Morita with Edwin M. Reingold and Mitsuko Shimomura
(Dutton, 309 pp., $18.95)

Takeover: The New Wall Street Warriors The Men, the Money, the Impact
by Moira Johnston
(Arbor House, 395 pp., $19.95)

The Leading Edge: CEOs Who Turned Their Companies Around
by Mark Potts and Peter Behr
(McGraw-Hill, 220 pp., $16.95)

Joseph Nocera is the executive editor of *New England Monthly*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I mean *everything*. Here is An Wang, a mere tot of six years, finding a bird's nest on the ground with a wounded sparrow in it. He decides to take the sparrow home, but leaves it outside until he can tell his parents. But when he goes back to retrieve his bird, he finds that . . . it's gone! A cat has eaten it! The young boy is stunned. But some good comes of it. Young An has learned a lesson. And what might that be? "It was my first lesson in the importance of acting rather than hesitating." Who'da thunk it? Most of Wang's other lessons run along similar lines. He does well on exams and learns "that I could rise to the occasion in other situations as well." He invents his revolutionary memory core device for computers but then fails to take the next few steps that would have made his memory cores even more of a breakthrough. Naturally, "It was a lesson I took to heart." He negotiates a deal with a machine tool company, but soon realizes that the arrangement is not going to work out. "It was a mistake," he writes soberly, "and a lesson." Then, on the very next page, Wang Laboratories builds a phototypesetting device called Linasec. Guess what? "While Linasec turned out to be a very successful product, it, too, taught me a lesson." (You don't want to know.)

WANG'S book contains all the other elements that have come to characterize the post-*Iacocca* autobiography. There is the obligatory sop to the Woman-Without-Whom-None-of-This-Would-Have-Been-Possible ("Lorraine . . . instantly saw the value of patenting my invention. . . . Without her urging, I might not have had the courage and drive to seek the patent") and the I-Didn't-Do-It-To-Get-Rich humility ("For the past few years, I have given away more than I have earned"). There are the Sage Musings of the Elder Statesman ("I am also heartened to see that today both Taiwan and China are hesitantly moving to correct their past wrongs") and the rolling of the drums as The Great Man makes The Tough Decision.

When Wang takes the company public, for instance, he calls it "the most difficult decision in the history of the company." Of course, taking a company public is a tough decision, because the founder has to weigh the advantages of equity capital against the undeniable disadvantage of losing some measure of control. Presumably it was particularly difficult for Wang, who is legendary in the computer business for his unwillingness to give up control. (Need I add that this particular personality trait is nowhere discussed in his autobiography?) But Wang's solution hardly qualifies as gutting it up. He simply decides to issue a class of stock with minimal voting rights. In other words, he gets to have his cake and eat it too: equity capital and complete control. This is his toughest decision ever? "The result," he writes smugly, "is that Wang employees can watch the maraudings of corporate raiders and acquisition-hungry companies with some equanimity." He makes no mention of Wang shareholders, who can't do a damn thing when their stock sinks slowly into oblivion.

There are larger problems with this book as well, two in particular. One is that Wang seems to have learned a few lessons from the Lillian Hellman School of Non-Fiction. That is to say, the good doctor will sometimes stretch the truth. Not long after this book appeared in bookstores, Wang Laboratories announced a $30 million quarterly loss. I searched in vain through Wang's autobiography to find any indication that the company was in trouble. The only hint I came upon was a short section toward the end in which the Founder had smoked out a problem, but he had, in dramatic fashion, immediately stepped in and turned the thing around.

As it turns out, the truth is a bit different. The way I hear it, much of the Wang troubles in recent years can be attributed to the company's chronic habit of getting its products to market late. Within the company, most people point the finger for this failure at Wang's eldest son, Fred. Indeed, the rise to power of number one son has caused a good deal of turmoil at Wang, for there were other, better qualified executives ready to take the helm. Yet Dr. Wang, who is revered by everyone at the company, has made it clear that Fred is the heir apparent. (Not long ago, he finally made it official and named Fred company president.) "The Freddie factor," one former Wang employee calls it, adding that pro- and anti-Fred Wang sentiments have turned the company into a very political place.

It's probably too much to expect Wang to say anything but swell things about his son in his autobiography. But it does seem to me that after shelling out $17.95, a reader deserves more than the kind of public relations pap that Wang has served up. The reader deserves a real, live autobiography, with a

MAY 25 - JUNE 26, 1987

POLITICS IN ENGLAND

Syracuse University again presents an outstanding opportunity for students of International Relations to learn about politics and social issues in England during an intensive five-week summer seminar. Through instruction and interviewing of many prominent British figures, course participants will gain a broad understanding of government as well as issues such as nuclear disarmament, race relations, foreign trade, unionism, and the media and free expression. Based in London, the Politics in England seminar offers six credits at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. For information and an application, contact:

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS ABROAD
119 EUCLID AVENUE
SYRACUSE, NY 13244
315/423-3471

Learn Spanish On Your Own!

Not just a phrasebook, but a *real* language course! More than 29 hours of recorded material make this self-instructional cassette/book course a truly effective way to learn Spanish.

The course consists of a series of cassettes recorded by *native* Latin-American Spanish speakers, and accompanying textbook. You'll learn to speak Spanish the way you learned English — by listening and repeating. It's easy, and takes only 25 minutes a day. Your cassette player becomes your "teaching machine." You learn where and when you want to, and at your own pace.

The course was developed by the Foreign Service Institute to train U.S. State Department personnel. In addition, it has been used successfully by thousands of our mail-order customers.

Packaged in handsome vinyl binders, the course is available in two parts. Order either, or save 10% by ordering both:

☐ **Volume I: Basic.** 12 cassettes (17 hr.), manual and 464-p. text, $135.

☐ **Volume II: Intermediate:** 8 cassettes (12 hr.), manual and 614-p. text, $120.

(CT residents add sales tax)

Phone orders call toll-free: **1-800-243-1234**

To order by mail, clip this ad and send with your name and address, and a check or money order — or charge to your credit card (VISA, MasterCard, AmEx, Diners) by enclosing card number, expiration date, and your signature.

Try it for 3 weeks at no risk — we promise prompt refund if not completely satisfied. We offer courses in 47 languages; send for free catalog.

audio-forum®
RmK331, 96 Broad St., Guilford, CT 06437

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

real, live human being at its center. And that gets at the other major problem with this book. Even when Wang does tell the truth, he does it in the most banal fashion imaginable. The escape back to China gets one sentence. Moments of potential drama are astonishingly dull. Wang is never more than a cardboard character in his own book. The things about Wang and his company that you long to know (what was life like as a Route 128 pioneer? what goes into creating a revolutionary new machine like Wang's first word processor?) are either skimmed over or omitted entirely. In Wang's book, products simply appear, as if dropped from the sky. What Wang has written is nothing more than an extended, first-person annual report—the classic product of the vanity press. Except that his publisher paid him, instead of the other way around.

THANKFULLY, *Made In Japan*, Akio Morita's autobiography, is not this bad. The writing is better (maybe because Morita had two ghosts instead of one). For the first few chapters, at least, the book tantalizes with the possibility that it might actually be good. When Morita writes of his childhood in prewar Japan, he grounds his account in telling details:

> A school principal who made a mistake when he recited the Imperial Rescript on Education committed suicide to atone for it. . . . Conductors on the trolley cars that ran past the imperial palace grounds in Tokyo would announce the moment everybody was expected to bow. Schoolchildren bowed to the portable Shinto shrine. . . . These were ways the military used to keep the nation in their power, and people like me and my parents went along.

OK, it's not Russell Baker. But it's not awful, either. A little later, Morita actually describes the laborious process of trial and error that went into inventing the tape for Sony's first tape recorders, and it's fascinating.

But the book soon degenerates. Morita turns out to be an incorrigible name-dropper whose mind is cluttered with East-West clichés. In the obligatory chapter on the differences between the American and Japanese styles of doing business, Morita complains that: (1) America has too many lawyers; (2) there is a lack of trust between business and government; (3) our CEOs don't resign in disgrace when something goes wrong; (4) our guys are too profit-oriented; (5) American businesses are too hierarchical; (6) there are too many perks in American companies; and (7) America has too many consultants. (In another chapter, Morita writes about China's tentative experiments in capitalism in a tone that fairly drips with condescension. For his part, Wang seems to hold the Japanese in equally low regard. "Having both observed and experienced Japan's economic aggressiveness," he writes, "I am led to the conclusion that they learned little from . . . World War II, and instead of tempering their imperial ambitions, they are merely pursuing their goal in the economic arena rather than the military one." Old attitudes die hard.)

Most frustrating is the tendency Morita shares with Wang to leave out of his book precisely the things you most want to know. One example among many: Sony invented the Betamax, the first machine that allowed people to videotape television shows. Morita tells us this fact with great pride at least a half-dozen times. Once the machine has been invented and has come to market, however, Morita stops talking about it. But out in the real world, that's when things started to get interesting. Sony, a company with a reputation for marketing savvy, had a huge advantage with the Betamax. It not only had the first video recorder; it also had what still is the best product. Yet the Betamax has become a vanishing species. VHS has become the industry standard and now has over 80 percent of the market. How did this happen? I read *Made In Japan* hoping to find an answer. I found none.

Morita's life, as he describes it, is a relentless progression of successes and achievements. There are no self-doubts, no failures of nerve, no moments that aren't part of a personal march to glory. Introspection is beyond him. Ultimately, there is no critical intelligence here, no sense that Morita has any deep understanding about himself or his company. My own feeling, having met a CEO or two, is that this lack of critical intelligence comes with the territory. The introspective types tend not to rise to the top in business; the rewards of capitalism belong to the narrow-minded, I suppose. And that's understandable. Building a company requires a willingness to put on blinders, to shut out nagging self-doubts, to present to the world at all times a "positive mental attitude." It's just that a positive mental attitude doesn't make for very compelling autobiography. What makes an autobiography good is soul-searching, the critical intelligence brought to bear on one's own past, the life examined for truths that go deeper than "lessons."

UNFORTUNATELY, critical intelligence is not just lacking in corporate autobiographies; it is also in short supply in most business books by journalists. This is, in fact, the greatest single flaw in most business writing. Moira Johnston's *Takeover*—a gushy account of *The New Wall Street Warriors*, as the subtitle puts it—is only the most spectacular recent example. And what is particularly spectacular about Johnston's book is the degree to which the author looks like a fool in the wake of the Ivan Boesky scandal.

"I was introduced to the subject of corporate takeovers at twenty thousand feet," she begins, "sharing a Mesa jet with T. Boone Pickens as he launched his bid for Phillips Petroleum." What she fails to add is that she was aboard the jet in her short-lived capacity as Pickens's first ghostwriter. (For the record, I was the second Pickens ghostwriter to get the ax. Jim Conaway, a former reporter for the *Washington Post*, recently finished the job.) Nonetheless, Johnston's fall from grace failed to knock the stars from her eyes. To her, the corporate raiders are exciting. They're shaking up corporate America! They're a fun bunch to be around! ("Perhaps they come closer to the true Renaissance man," she swoons, "a man of commerce, ambition, and swaggering individualism.") In the case of Sir James Goldsmith, they even have great sex lives—what with all the mistresses on different continents! Her prose is breathless ("In the heat of a deal, it is easy to believe you are at the white hot heart of the universe"), her descriptions hilarious, especially in retrospect. It is as if she were so tongue-tied in the presence of these glamorous dragon slayers (and the somewhat less glamorous aides to dragon slayers whom she spent most of her time interviewing) that she forgot she was supposed to ask questions. She's gaga the whole time.

Thus she describes Boone Pickens: "Here was a distant relative of Daniel Boone [actually, he's not] standing up to a glowering array of corporate power with the same guts Daniel Boone had shown facing Indians and grizzlies on the frontier." Or Sir James Goldsmith: "He had pursued capitalism against the socialist wave with dazzling success and—as a British tabloid noted—with golden

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

balls." Or how about this one: "Discretion is one of the reasons Boyd Jeffries has become important to T. Boone Pickens and hostile takeovers. . . . 'We never try to know the reason why,' [says Jeffries]. . . . 'It's not our job to make moral decisions.' " Or this: "As the firm set out on an aggressive program of diversification, Wall Street watched to see where Drexel Burnham's ingenuity would lead it next." Or, my personal favorite, this quotation that pops up near the end of the book: "Greed is all right by the way. You can be greedy and still feel good about yourself." Ivan Boesky said that.

Johnston gets to see Joseph Perella, the co-director of First Boston's legendary mergers and acquisitions department. He tells her how his firm convinced Texaco to go after Getty Oil, even though an agreement between Pennzoil and Getty had already been announced. (Her interview took place long before the Pennzoil-Texaco case went to trial, at a time when Perella still thought the deal was a coup for First Boston.) He explains that a First Boston goal is "to be in every major deal." He adds that he wanted a piece of the Getty Oil deal even though his firm had no client interested in the company and, really, no particular reason to get involved. Except one: First Boston could reap a huge fee.

Then Perella describes how he pits one company against another, pressuring them by saying that if they don't get into the deal, someone else will. "If you keep worrying about the competition," Perella tells Texaco, "they're going to gain on you. . . . You've got to seize the ramparts first!" Six days later, Texaco had stolen Getty from Pennzoil, and First Boston had pocketed $10 million for a week's work. This is an extraordinarily revealing monologue. So steeped in the machismo merger culture that First Boston epitomizes, so uncaring about the fates of the companies he is "putting into play," so contemptuous of the CEOs who employ him, Perella's speech should give pause about the rise of go-go investment banking, even without the Boesky and Levine affairs. But Johnston is oblivious. She takes it all down. She shuts her notebook. She's out the door to her next appointment. It's time to find out if Sir James has a new mistress.

The problem is not that corporate raiding, or even go-go investment banking, is necessarily evil, the current scandals notwithstanding. It is that the subject is serious enough and important enough to deserve something more than overheated note-taking. It deserves thought. Alas, this is exactly what Johnston is unwilling—or unable—to give it. "The war," she writes limply, "is too young to assess." If Johnston has any excuse at all, it is that she is new to the world of business. Mark Potts and Peter Behr, who wrote *The Leading Edge*, can't use that excuse: Potts is the business editor of the *San Francisco Examiner*; Behr is a business writer for the *Washington Post*. But what they've produced is as unthinking in its own way as *Takeover*. It's just the flip side.

THE LEADING EDGE is one of those "Son of *In Search of Excellence*" books that attempt to show, by the use of concrete examples, how corporate performance can be improved. Trouble is, the authors have never met a concrete example they didn't like. Jack Welch decides to shake up General Electric by changing its corporate culture. Brilliant fellow, that Jack Welch. Edward Jefferson of DuPont prefers to "get back to the basics." Great idea, Ed. James Bere at Borg-Warner concludes that his company needs to get away from basics by diversifying into the service sector. What a masterstroke! Potts and Behr can even find nice things to say about the Coca-Cola formula fiasco.

The Leading Edge is as worshipful of CEOs as Johnston is of raiders. These are responsible men, their brows furrowed as they worry about the fate of their companies and their country. But the lessons of their careers are not so straightforward. They want to encourage risk-taking, but only within the safe confines of the corporate bureaucracy. Actually, they're against bureaucracy, and are all working diligently to make their companies less top-heavy. They shudder at the thought of those nasty mergers—except the brilliant ones they engineer themselves. And so on.

So how do we get better business books? Despite Potts and Behr, I think a lot of the answer has to do with experience. It's worth remembering that the "business is sexy" movement is still fairly new. It wasn't that long ago that newspapers habitually assigned their most irredeemable deadbeats to the business page; it was an assignment that was considered not much better than writing obituaries. So the universe of

Don't be wakened by a shrill alarm! Get...

"Mynah", The Talking Alarm Clock Just $39.95*

But read the ad for an even better deal!

One of life's small daily annoyances is to be wakened by a shrill, loud, and "unfeeling" alarm. The beep-beep-beep of electronic alarms isn't much more helpful.

What a difference with *"Mynah", The Talking Alarm Clock.* At the appointed hour, a melodious yet authoritative voice will tell you the time and bid you to start your day. Don't worry if the message doesn't get through the first time. *"Mynah"* will repeat it six times. There is no way that you can miss it.

But that isn't all the talking that *"Mynah"* will do. Touch the top of the clock, and the same voice will give you the time to the minute Many executives use *"Mynah"* to monitor their day. Have an appointment, meet a deadline? Program it into *"Mynah"* and you can rely on being reminded.

"Mynah" is a quality product of Japanese technology. Its looks are exquisite, with the pyramidal shape reminiscent of San Francisco's best-loved landmark. We import these marvelous talking clocks in large quantities and are able to bring them to you for just $39.95. But we have an even better deal: ***Buy two for $79.90, and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE!*** Be wakened gently, monitor your day, and have someone *tell* you what time it is. Get a *"Mynah"* of your very own!

●"Mynah" *is beautifully finished in black and chrome. It is 2½ inches high. It works off two AAA-cells (included). In addition to its voice announcement, it has a clearly legible LCD readout.*

FOR FASTEST SERVICE, ORDER
TOLL FREE (800) 621-1203
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Please give order **#1101B895.** If you prefer, mail check or card authorization and expiration. We need daytime phone for all orders and issuing bank for charge orders. We cannot ship without this. UPS/insurance: $4.95 for one *"Mynah" Alarm Clock*, $6.95 for three. Add sales tax for CA delivery. You have 30-day return and one year warranty.

Note: For quantity orders (100+), call Mr. Ernest Gerard, our Wholesale/Premium Manager, at (415) 543-6570 or write him at the address below.

since 1967
haverhills
131 Townsend Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

writers who understand business, and can write about it intelligently, is still fairly small. But there are signs that the improvement of the genre has already begun. *The Reckoning*, David Halberstam's recent book about Ford and Nissan, shows an understanding of the imperatives of business that was missing from *The Powers That Be*, his previous book about the media industry. Ken Auletta's second business book, *Greed and Glory on Wall Street*, is as keen in its judgments and insights as his first foray into the corporate world—a book about the Schlumberger Corporation—was wrongheaded. Many of the better newspaper reporters covering business, such as Steve Coll of the *Washington Post* and James Stewart of the *Wall Street Journal*, are landing fat book contracts. Coll's book will be about the Texaco-Getty affair; Stewart's about the Boesky-Levine scandal. Judging by their previous work, both of them will avoid the tendency of novices like Johnston to glorify (or to vilify) unthinkingly the raiders or their enemies in corporate America. A touch of reportorial skepticism is the first thing a good business book needs, and skepticism comes of experience.

So there's hope. Maybe Moira Johnston's next business book will be worth reading. Who knows? Maybe she'll decide to write about Ivan Boesky. (Did she really call him "the silver fox of risk arbitrage"?)

ONE DOUBTS, THE OTHER DOESN'T

Voltaire
by A. J. Ayer

(Random House, 182 pp., $19.95)

Rousseau and the Republic of Virtue: The Language of Politics in the French Revolution
by Carol Blum

(Cornell University Press, 302 pp., $24.95)

There are natural skeptics who live happily with their doubts, but many people find uncertainty intolerable. To escape from the anxieties created by their incredulity, some may turn inward, like Rousseau, and find reassurance in a powerful awareness of their unique identity. Others may look at the world around them in the hope that an understanding of nature and history might offer an adequate compensation for their lost beliefs. Voltaire chose this strategy, but it was not entirely successful or coherent. And it is one of the many merits of A. J. Ayer's brief study of Voltaire that it engages its subject directly in the serious philosophical arguments that his intellectual floundering deserves.

This is particularly fortunate since, except for *Candide*, Voltaire is now unreadable. The dramas that his contemporaries admired so much seem unbearably stilted. The poetry is turgid. Some short pieces of witty prose remain interesting, but on the whole he has not worn nearly as well as Rousseau—and for reasons that were already apparent by 1794, as Carol Blum shows in her learned book about Jacobin rhetoric. Still, Voltaire continues to fascinate, not only because his attack on religious authority, fanaticism, and superstition set the agenda for the Enlightenment, but also because he was the very model of a modern intellectual. Indeed, Voltaire was perhaps the first fully self-conscious member of the republic of letters, the spirit of which is still alive.

The central drama of Voltaire's life was his quarrel with God. He was never an atheist. He was a deist who believed in natural religion, the notion that the order of nature proved the existence of an intelligent creator; and most of Ayer's intelligent book explains the difficulties that this belief caused him. At times he would see the world as a self-determined, natural sequence of causes and effects that left mankind only one task: that of understanding it. Mostly, however, he was not prepared to follow Spinoza in letting nature absorb God in this fashion. Instead, he clung to the idea of an omnipotent and omniscient deity who was responsible in some way for the universe. As a result, he could never resolve the tensions between the argument for God's existence based on the design of nature and an exceptionally intense awareness of the folly, cruelty, and injustice of human life, much of it caused by Christianity and other religions.

Why does an almighty being allow so much suffering? The answer of fideism—"believe what is incomprehensible"—did not appeal to him. It was too easy a renunciation of reason; and reason was not a small thing, as Voltaire repeated in any number of different ways in his endless and nervous commentaries on Pascal. Pascal's famous wager—we lose nothing if we choose to believe in God and he does not exist, but we lose the possibility of eternal bliss if we choose not to believe in God and he does exist—seemed a poor bargain to Voltaire. The pleasures of this world were not trivial, and it was absurd to work for one's salvation in a predetermined order. Without a resort to blind faith, there was only one logical possibility for him: that the deity was all-powerful but not benevolent. This is not the best of all possible worlds. We can easily imagine a better one: Providence is not interested in human welfare, and we must therefore look out for ourselves as best we can. Live modestly, cultivate your garden, do not expect too much, and you might get through life more or less tolerably. It was excellent advice, but Voltaire did not follow it. He was, in fact, a compulsive troublemaker.

Intellectually, Voltaire was, as Ayer shows, a far too uncritical disciple of Locke's philosophy, which appealed both to his natural aversion to metaphysics and to his practical turn of mind. It led him to sound scientific principles and away from speculation and system-building. In writing history, he was often despondent, recalling how shaky our knowledge of the past must always be; but he fortified himself by setting down rigorous standards for documentary evidence. These were particularly important when applied to the critical reading of the Old Testament, which Voltaire delighted in exposing as both ridiculous and unedifying. The New Testament was merely silly. No sane person could credit its many miracles. It was almost as if God in his malevolence had wished religious beliefs upon mankind, to make

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

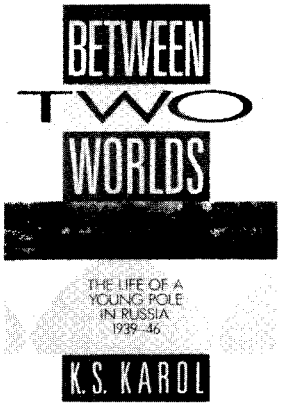
it irrational, fanatical, and violent. For in Voltaire's view it was the sheer immorality of the conduct inspired by religion that was so utterly revolting. This was no longer philosophical skepticism. It was the rage of a man who believed that mankind shared a single moral law that would be recognized by all, once the accumulation of religious prejudice had been lifted from their minds. Did not all philosophers basically agree about right and wrong? The ancient Jews, who, with their Bible and their revelations, had spawned so many reprehensible religions, were much to blame; Voltaire continued to dislike their modern descendants.

THE POLITICAL implications of these views were extremely radical. Anti-clericalism and demands for religious toleration struck at the very foundations of the ancien régime, which depended on the Church for support and legitimization. When he visited England, Voltaire was delighted by the multitude of sects whose members traded amicably on the stock exchange, and by the general intellectual freedom. Writers and artists were more respected in England than in France, he announced. His friend Adrienne Lecouvreur could not get a decent burial, while a celebrated English actress was buried ceremoniously in Westminster Abbey. Only England's literature (including the plays of Shakespeare) was not up to French standards; but that was the only misuse of freedom in England.

Clearly, then, a state church well under the thumb of the prince was the best alternative to religious oppression. Unlike his contemporary Montesquieu, Voltaire was not concerned about royal absolutism. He not only believed in benevolent despotism, he saw goodwill where no one else could discern it: in Louis XIV, in Peter the Great, in Catherine the Great. He flattered and cajoled Frederick the Great, to whose court in Prussia he briefly fled, until he and the king (inevitably) fell out. His confidence in princes rested on the hope that they would eventually tame the Church and recognize the benefits of English policies. Moreover, they and their courts were the best (indeed the only) supporters of the arts. Civilization depended on their patronage; at one time Voltaire even toyed with the idea that all men of letters might live in a safe, rational republic in Cleves, under the protection of the King of Prussia. Rousseau was not the only writer to be disgusted by Voltaire's sycophantic fantasies. The editors of the *Encyclopédie*, who generally admired him, were similarly repelled.

If Voltaire had illusions about princes, he was not, as Ayer unfairly claims, indifferent to social reform. To be sure, he was far from egalitarian, but he did interfere at some cost to himself in the politics of Geneva by writing a very cogent pamphlet on behalf of its disenfranchised artisans and other politically excluded citizens. (That was more than Rousseau ever did for them, though he did write unforgettably about the loss of equality.) Ayer does give a very good account of Voltaire's courageous and noble actions on behalf of the victims of religious persecution. He was involved in at least three spectacular cases of official injustice and cruelty to Protestants and to a young scoffer. Jean Calas, a Protestant, was falsely accused, tortured, and executed for the murder of his son. That eventually his name was cleared, and some restitution made to his family, was entirely due to Voltaire's unrelenting efforts. He did as much for another Protestant family, and raised a hue and cry when the 20-year old Chevalier de la Barre had his tongue cut out and his hand cut off, and was then thrown into the flames, for acts of blasphemy, which included mutilating a cross. Voltaire

"Makes Pasternak's *Zhivago* seem like an understatement."*



"A vivid, penetrating, and moving insider's closeup of Stalin's Russia at war." —*The Guardian**

"A true book about the devastation of war, the protective love of women, camaraderies beyond the legislation of commissars and about a people's soul." —John Berger

"Wonderful, even instructive, reading." —*Publisher's Weekly*

"This witty, bitter biography is the story of an outsider, sleepwalking through WWII with the exhausting, disjointed vividness of a nightmare." —*The New Statesman*

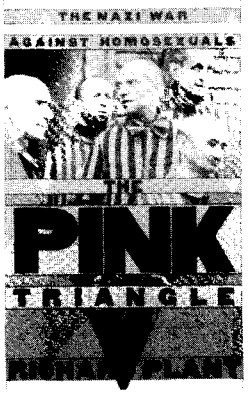
FPT $19.95
A NEW REPUBLIC BOOK

"Shows the horrors of sexual ideologies gone astray."*

"A classic addition to gay studies, Holocaust studies, and German history. . . . a well-documented, controlled, and compelling account." —*Booklist*, American Library Association

"A wrenching, highly readable study. . . . Recommended for both its personal insights and scholarship." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"Shows the horrors of sexual ideologies gone astray." —*The Christian Century**



FPT $19.95
A NEW REPUBLIC BOOK

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY 521 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10175

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

used all his biting wit and literary skill to make these horrors known. Ultimately, it is as the protesting voice of outraged reason that he will remain a hero.

Voltaire began his flight from conservative bourgeois respectability at an early age, when he spun a typical "family romance" about being the son not of his actual father (the notary François Arouet) but of a songwriter. As soon as a literary career became possible, he changed his name to de Voltaire, thus creating a new public self, removed from his origins. He had inherited a good head for business, however, and speculated very successfully. In spite of abusing Jews as usurers, he lent out money at interest all his life. By the time he died he had amassed a huge fortune. Among his many disagreeable qualities were avarice, greed, and a great meanness, not to mention envy, malice, and colossal vanity, which his social experiences may have exacerbated. Success came early to Voltaire. Though he was so profligate that his father threatened him with a lettre de cachet, and his boldness landed him in the Bastille once or twice, he was also the darling of the fashionable world, and always had some sort of royal pension. He did find out quite early, however, what his real place was in the ancien régime. He rashly insulted a nobleman, who simply hired thugs to beat him up. When Voltaire complained to his aristocratic friends, not one of them took his side, or even sympathized with him. Clearly, more than talent and a new name were needed to rise out of one's class. So ultimately M. de Voltaire settled on an estate near Geneva, and then at the famous Ferney in Lorraine, where he held court for years. He returned to Paris only to receive a tumultuous public welcome just before he died at an immense age. By then he knew that public opinion had become an independent political power, and that he was one of its chief rulers. At the outbreak of the Revolution his plays were often performed, and he was hailed as "the destroyer of superstition." But it was Rousseau who was seen as "the founder of liberty."

ROUSSEAU, too, was a self-created character, in both his private and his public personae. Although as a Catholic convert he had lost his citizenship, he embarked upon his literary career as a self-proclaimed "citizen of Geneva." He not only could not and would not live there, he also quarreled with the authorities, who eventually banned *Emile* and *The Social Contract*. At that point he became just "the citizen," a universal man. His misfortunes also defined him. He saw himself as a universal victim—and as such peculiarly virtuous—not because of what he had done but because of what he felt and had suffered.

His actual life was in fact quite shameful, not least because he abandoned his children. But somehow most readers of his stunning autobiography believed that by openly proclaiming his sins he proved his sincerity, good intentions, and purity of heart. Whatever else he was, he was seen as virtuous, both as a republican patriot and as a suffering victim. He alone spoke for the people, though he was not one of them; he was too good to belong to anyone but himself and mankind. He dined with princes and supped with peasants, knowing every class and belonging to none.

The tensions of skepticism were not endurable for Rousseau. He wrote Voltaire to say that to doubt that God was good or that there was an afterlife made him too unhappy. Atheism was fine for the rich and fortunate, but it only added to the suffering of the poor and miserable. Why deprive them of their only hope? He also worried about the moral consequences of unbelief. It could only encourage wickedness. Truth was not a matter of evidence or calculation, but of inner conviction. He looked into his heart and found that he instinctively yearned for God, who must therefore exist and be kind. (He also found an uncorrupted self full of good feelings, which proved the innate goodness of unspoiled men.) Voltaire was wrong and cruel, moreover, to blame the Lisbon earthquake of 1754 on an arbitrary providence. It was all the fault of civilized, corrupt society. If we hadn't left the primitive state, if we hadn't built cities, earthquakes would not cause so much damage.

Voltaire regarded these views as misanthropic and absurd; he believed that civilization, not a return to savagery, was our best hope. Rousseau went on to say that what was needed was a new religion, a civic faith to replace the intolerance and fanaticism of Christianity and to instill the proper moral and social sentiments and loyalties in men. Voltaire, quite rightly, detected in this proposal

GRETE SAMSA'S LETTER TO H.

Dear H., we have been in the new house almost a year, and mother and father have recovered from their ordeal. It is hard to imagine how painful it was for them. As for me, I sleep late as always and practice the violin. But to answer your questions about Gregor: Yes, I admit I am still troubled by what happened to him. Not that I was confident he would wake up the same as he was upon falling asleep. Only the most foolish of us believes we don't change. But who would have thought of going so far! Was he enacting the first stage of a terrible privacy? The last stage of a disfiguring illness? Was he preparing for death in a new and spectacular way? Or was he trying to prove that without inhibitions we become not Berninis or Raphaels but what he became? Your guess is as good as mine. Perhaps what happened is best seen as a form of religious protest with Gregor allegorizing our hopeless term on earth, except that his interest in spiritual matters could hardly be said to exist. Poor boy! He was after all a poet who, in deference to others, kept his calling a secret. Might we consider his hideous change, then, an indiscretion, a kind of counter-life, a fictive existence in which he became his work? Whatever the case, there were moments when Gregor, already bronzed by the instreaming light of his window, appeared a miraculous monument to himself, both smaller and larger than life. He probably thought that the world, despite its cities, had not begun in earnest, so why not fool around. Alas, I myself have started to feel the onset of something, a sadness perhaps, the dawn of a new season, an existence even. But enough of this. Tell me about yourself and what it is like where you are. Do the leaves ever stop falling? Are the shadows ever anything but long? And the mountains? Can one see them?

MARK STRAND

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

treason against the ideals of reason and enlightenment. The two men had never really liked each other, but it was war from then on: Rousseau became paranoid; Voltaire became abusive. Rousseau, he said, was a pox-ridden clown, the bastard of the dog of Diogenes, whose novel was a mishmash of debauchery and moralistic platitudes, and even when he was right he never talked about anything but himself.

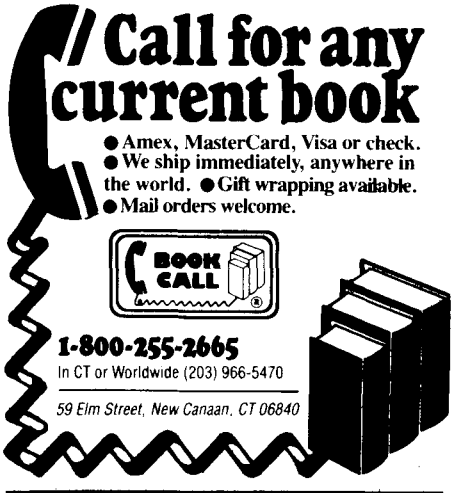
The last remark was, in fact, true. But the others give a good idea of Voltaire's character. He did have grounds for complaint, since Rousseau had in his very first published essay accused "Arouet" of selling his talent to please women who ruled society but who, unlike men, could not bear strong and powerful poetry. It was a mean thrust, and a revealing one: Voltaire liked the company of intelligent women and thought of them as the equals of men, while Rousseau feared women, because he thought that they enfeebled and dominated men unless they were controlled. Domesticated and submissive, his ideal woman spent her time breast-feeding her children. And as part of a great cultural transformation, Rousseau managed to make the nursing mother the symbol of virtue and a revolutionary heroine. Breast-feeding has been a recurrent ideology ever since, but in the late 18th century it became part of one of the greatest of revolutionary movements.

AS CAROL BLUM tells us in her well-documented account of revolutionary language and imagery, the cult of Rousseau grew so enormously in the years after his death that by 1789 his very name was magic. As he had predicted, the books that stirred women and young people were not his political works, but his novel *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, *Emile*, and his autobiographical writings. Following Jean Starobinski's penetrating remark that Rousseau's autobiography was "homologous" with the mentality of the Jacobins during the Terror, because in each case injured innocence was driven to strike out at a hostile and degenerate social world, Blum shows us exactly how "Rousseau as a figure of virtue served the revolutionaries."

Virtue, of course, is a notoriously slippery term. When the Revolution broke out, Rousseau had for years been idolized as peculiarly virtuous—because he was an innocent victim of a selfish and persecuting society, because he had a beautiful and open soul, and because he tried to flee the contaminations of the city by seeking a simple solitude or a rural retreat. Had Rousseau not cried out, in the very first of his published discourses, "Oh virtue, sublime science of simple souls . . . are not your principles engraved in all hearts? . . . Listen to the voice of conscience in the silence of the passions"? Here virtue is identified with the untutored habits of spontaneous people who have not been deformed by the ways of civilization. A simple, frugal, family-centered life in the country became fashionable as Rousseau's enchanted readers came to share his daydreams, to imitate him and the characters of his fictional writings. Virtue in this version is a matter of what we would call lifestyle, and of the feelings of authenticity that go along with it. Rousseau's other vision of virtue, however, was quite different. It was all Spartan martial rigor and patriotic enthusiasm, scorning the effeminacy and luxury of modern times. Nothing elevates the soul more than the memory of the Romans engaged in slaughtering their neighbors. This is the social state purified by equality, by the love of the public good.

THE JACOBINS, to be sure, did not create, in their years of ascendancy (1792-94), a Republic of Virtue. But they spoke incessantly of its coming, and Rousseau was their acknowledged prophet. Phrases from his writings appear throughout their speeches and letters. Saint-Just and Robespierre saw the new French Republic as a return to the virtuous civic past, dreaming of censors and of a system of education that would take little boys away from their families to be taught farming, military skills, and communal discipline at public expense. Girls were to be taught domestic modesty at home. There were to be great public festivals to bring the people together, and to replace both the immoral theater and religious rituals. Robespierre's invention of a cult of the Supreme Being was part of a larger scheme to save the people from the moral dangers of atheism that anti-clerical propaganda might foster, and to supply them with a republican ethos. All this was proclaimed in sentences right out of Rousseau.

The natural virtue of unspoiled men was not neglected, as Blum points out in the most original part of her book. It remained intact in the hearts of both Saint-Just and Robespierre. By incarnating the people, perceived as an undifferentiated spiritual entity, they too became pure, natural men, impervious to the corruption that threatened them from all sides. They had truly absorbed the "science of simple minds." Robespierre never pretended to be a Rousseauian "great legislator," a new Lycurgus. He was, rather, the distilled essence of the people, their voice and their agent. He felt their needs, including the need for religious faith, and hated the philosophes for their skepticism and intellectual elegance. When he fell from power he seemed to long for victimhood, as if it were part of his self-imposed role in life. He was the people in their natural, not their heroic, phase—though the two were quite compatible, since civic virtue would come when all the enemies of the people, and their own weakness and ignorance, were finally overcome. That was the task of the Revolution. This was not Rousseau's doctrine, but it was a vi-


Call for any current book
● Amex, MasterCard, Visa or check.
● We ship immediately, anywhere in the world. ● Gift wrapping available.
● Mail orders welcome.
BOOK CALL
1-800-255-2665
In CT or Worldwide (203) 966-5470
59 Elm Street, New Canaan, CT 06840

AUTHORS WANTED BY NEW YORK PUBLISHER

Leading subsidy book publisher seeks manuscripts of all types: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, scholarly and juvenile works, etc. New authors welcomed. Send for free, illustrated 40-page brochure NR-1. Vantage Press. 516 W. 34 St., New York, N.Y. 10001

"REVIEWING the PBS special *The Conservatives* in the *Washington Post*, Tom Shales writes that the show proves 'that conservatives really are as stuffy and sexless as liberals have always liked to think'. Shales, a sexy liberal, weighs in at around 280 pounds, by the look of him. Just thought we'd mention it."

For a free copy of the current issue of National Review write to Dept R-26. 150 East 35th Street New York, N.Y. 10016

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sion that his writings had already encouraged for years. The Jacobins were both its beneficiaries and its eventual victims. Their Republic of Virtue never had a chance, and its classical rhetoric did not outlast them; but the self-edifying sentimentality upon which it had floated from the first was to be enduring.

The final irony is that Voltaire was entombed in the Pantheon in Paris in 1791 and, three years later, Rousseau's remains were placed next to his. Poems were written to show these two old enemies reconciled in Elysium. There is some sort of justice, however, in the fact that both coffins were robbed. When one visits them now, one looks at a pair of empty boxes, memorials to the false notion that skepticism and faith can live happily side by side.

JUDITH N. SHKLAR

Judith N. Shklar is John Cowles Professor of Government at Harvard University.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Emily Dickinson
by Cynthia Griffin Wolff

(Knopf, 641 pp., $25)

Cynthia Griffin Wolff, the latest among the numerous biographers of Emily Dickinson in the 100 years since the poet's death, early distinguishes her highly literary work from the others by expressing an opinion we don't expect from a biographer. "The only truly remarkable thing about Emily Dickinson's existence," Wolff writes, "is that she produced a very great deal of incomparable poetry." Wolff does not find it overwhelmingly interesting that Dickinson gradually narrowed her social intercourse until, in the latter half of her life, she virtually never stepped off the grounds of her house. This biographer barely mentions Dickinson's great and yet bitter friendship with her sister-in-law, Sue, and is only a little more curious about her relationship with the only man whom we know she both loved and was loved by, Judge Otis Lord. Wolff is even willing to forgo the pleasure other writers on Dickinson often have taken in gossiping about the lengthy, scandalous affair between her brother, Austin, and her future editor Mabel Loomis Todd. (After all, Wolff usefully reminds us, Mabel never met Dickinson face-to-face, and had only moved to Amherst five years before the poet's death.) Those who wish to read only one biography of Dickinson, and who want a literary account that also includes all the known external facts about a life lived mostly at home and almost entirely within the mind, had better turn to Richard Sewall's thorough, insightful, sympathetic *Life of Emily Dickinson*, published in three volumes in 1974.

But readers whose interest in Emily Dickinson lies mainly or exclusively in her work will be grateful for the many pages—often persuasive, always provocative—that Wolff devotes to close textual analysis of the poetry. And they may interpret Wolff's preference for referring to "Dickinson" rather than "Emily" as a double reminder: first, that biographers of male literary figures (or of other famous men, for that matter) are often not on a first-name basis with them; and more importantly, that Emily literally disappeared behind a door when she was a young woman, and there became Dickinson.

All the male Dickinsons—Emily's grandfather, her father, her brother—were preoccupied with the honor of the Dickinson name, and one of Wolff's most convincing biographical contributions is her portrayal of Emily's proud determination to carry on and even enhance that honor through her poetry. For all her teasing love of her brother Austin, Emily was deeply jealous of her father's excessive praise of him, especially of his letter writing. And she was frustrated too by the contradiction between the fine education her father had offered her at Mount Holyoke and the purely domestic life he expected her to take up on her return home. Reading Wolff's extensive excerpts from Edward Dickinson's acerbic, narrow-minded essays on woman's place, and particularly his attacks on the "literary wife" (which his own plainly was not), one can well imagine the ambition of a young woman—who happened to be both a literary genius and a devoted daughter—to prove her worth quite publicly. To Wolff, Dickinson's feckless efforts at publication may have bespoken social timidity, but certainly no enduring doubt of her own talent; given the range of "women's poetry" in Dickinson's time, immediate success at publication may if anything have seemed to her too small a hope. "With the vision of transcendent heroism that she had formulated," Wolff writes perceptively, "how could Emily Dickinson settle for a 'career'?" Dickinson's obsession with immortality, her poems and letters show, was not only religious; she clearly hoped, and sometimes assumed, that another, worldly immortality would come her way someday.

It is unfortunate that another of Wolff's few original biographical claims is both impossible to substantiate and an essential element in her interpretation of the poetry. Briefly, Wolff believes that Dickinson's mother, a shy and ineffectual woman, must have failed to conduct with baby Emily the visual communication that some psychologists call "eye/face gossip." Submitted first as a possibility, the theory becomes a certainty: "The 'magic time' of silent mother-infant intimacy had never occurred, and Emily Dickinson had never known that most primitive luxury of absolute trust." Surely no riskier foundation for a biography could be built than with assertions about the preverbal rapport between a child and her mother more than a century and a half ago. For what my guess is worth, Emily's laconic mother probably relied more heavily on eye contact (even if she was wall-eyed, as Wolff judges possible) than a more articulate mother would. But of course I don't know this, and neither does anyone else. Once this "failure" is established, Wolff leaps forward with an astonishingly confident series of deductions: Emily experienced a "fall into language," a need to settle for words rather than sight. It is largely because of Emily's mother's deficiency, Wolff extrapolates, that Dickinson's poems and letters are filled with a longing to *see* loved ones (although when they came she often turned them away). Even the opacity of this poet who delighted in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

riddles is explained as "her mother's habit of discourse transfigured into art."

Moreover—the argument proceeds—the "fact" that Emily's mother didn't look at her enough, or intimately enough, in addition to the undeniable fact of her father's frequent disappearances on business, led to a poetry obsessed with an untrustworthy God who also hid *his* face. The story of Jacob's wrestle with the angel, Wolff argues quite plausibly, provided for Dickinson a symbolic "turning point for all subsequent history," after which God would never again appear to us except as a voice. But Wolff's reading of the Jacob poems can, and should, stand on its own literary terms. It is weakened by the far too schematic connection she forces between the accidental "fall into language" that Emily purportedly experienced because of her mother's inadequacies and what all of us ostensibly suffer because of the Deity's betrayal: "God concealed His face and gave us a *word* in its place—humankind's first tragic fall into language."

WHAT IS most disappointing about Wolff's conflation of dubious psycholiterary theory with theology is that it undermines the larger social and religious context that she has so masterfully provided for Dickinson's life. Wolff has doggedly researched nearly every topic that touched Dickinson even collaterally, from 19th-century childbirth (whose terrors and disasters profoundly affected her mother and sister-in-law, among others) to the representations of Death on New England gravestones (which find indirect expression in the poetry). Although she has curiously little to say about the Civil War, Wolff examines other aspects of that era, and places Dickinson within it, more fully than anyone else I have read.

This biography makes it easier to imagine what life must have been like for a child hoping to share her elders' confidence in Heaven's reward while surrounded by random and continual death; for an independent young thinker, and a woman, and a poet who deified poetry, at the last flowering of a fervently evangelical and conformist age; for a hermit in a small, Puritan town in an America that was elsewhere becoming rapidly urbanized and secularized. And how queer it must have felt to be writing stylistically unconventional poetry that, in gravely questioning God's mercy, employed all the Christian symbolism and myth that Dickinson's believing contemporaries knew so well (and which we doubters, a century later, often do not). Wolff appealingly compares Dickinson to Robert Frost's "oven bird": she had set herself the task of discovering "what to make of a diminished thing." But the perception of God's diminishment or even disappearance at the end of the 19th century had so many causes—all of which, Wolff shows, impinged on Dickinson's deeply philosophical mind—that she surely would have tackled this problem whether or not her mother had "disappeared" too.

I BELIEVE WOLFF entirely right in seeing Dickinson as a woman haunted by the need to determine and reconcile herself to God's nature; but despite the many fine readings she offers of the fierce, frustrated poems devoted to that effort, I cannot share her conclusion that this poet "viewed all of human existence as essentially *wounded by the malignity* [my italics] of a disappearing God." Even less can I accept that Dickinson's identification with Jacob (whom she called a "pugilist and poet") and the heretical way she often used biblical language necessarily meant that she hoped "the Creator may be wounded just as he sought to wound mankind." This biography is relentless in its anger toward God, and I began to feel that the anger was more Wolff's than Dickinson's. As Wolff herself remarks, Dickinson's poetry became more imbued with faith from her early 30s on, and she lived and wrote to the age of 55. It is very late in this biography before we find an open acknowledgment of what many readers value most in Dickinson: the capacity "to 'Delight' in mere existence as the bird does."

Dickinson did delight in existence, and evidence of that is offered in each of several versions of her famous poem "It sifts from Leaden Sieves," in which falling snow softly transfigures a landscape. In one version,

> It deals Celestial Vail
>
> To Stump, and Stack—and Stem—
>
> . . . . . .
>
> It Ruffles Wrists of Posts
> As Ankles of a Queen—
> Then stills its Artisans—like Ghosts—
> Denying they have been—

Yet Woolf's fervent determination to see this subtle poet shaking her fist at the Deity in so many of the poems, regardless of their "surface" subjects, here produces an absurd reading: "The barely tolerable images of 'Stump, and Stack—and Stem—' yield to nightmare. . . . The elegant 'Ruffles' of the last stanza may obscure the gothic implications—arms, hands, rising out of the ground in supplication . . . ." Haven't those ruffles "obscured" the gothic implications quite thoroughly?

WHAT PUZZLES ME most about *Emily Dickinson* is its continual seesawing between just plain wrong assertions and brilliant, inarguable ones. The same critic who will not read "It sifts from Leaden Sieves" on its own terms is also capable of giving stunning line-by-line explications of dozens of difficult poems. Wolff's reading of "A Clock stopped" is probably the best of these. She notices (and is apparently the first to notice, as she gives no attributive footnote) that the word "noon" occurs precisely in the middle of the poem, and does so in seven others. This word even establishes a palindromic center, and thus a momentary breakdown in the clockwork of "A Clock stopped"—for, as Wolff remarks, "noon" offers two *no*'s facing each other, echoing visually the other *no*'s that chime audibly throughout the poem. A minor discovery like this must not be undervalued: it helps further to prove that Dickinson was indeed "enormously self-conscious as a literary craftsman." So much has been made of Dickinson's liberties with rhyme and meter that it is easy to forget just how deliberately and even mathematically she often got things "wrong" in order to get them right.

But this great poet who conceived designs so intricate they might well please a clockmaker was also untidy. She left in various stages of completion and in nearly illegible handwriting some 1,770 poems ranging from the merely whimsical to the immortal, and one cannot expect any critic to interpret them all to one's liking. A little like Emily Dickinson herself, Cynthia Griffin Wolff has given us a massive work of varying merit: some of it dismissible, much of it helpful, some of it even indispensable. And like Dickinson, too, she demands each reader's considered effort at making these distinctions.

MARY JO SALTER

Mary Jo Salter is the author of a book of poems, *Henry Purcell in Japan* (Knopf).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SALT LAKE CITY DIARIST

This Is The Place

EMIGRATION CANYON, just to the east of Salt Lake City, is the route by which the Mormons came down the Wasatch mountains to the spot where Brigham Young gazed on the inhospitable desert valley before him and improbably announced, "This is the place." It seems wholly in keeping with the literalness that is one of the strengths of Mormonism that the imposing memorial here is called the This Is The Place Monument. One of the peculiarities of Emigration Canyon is that, in spite of its place in Mormon lore, it is not Mormons but gentiles who have usually lived there; and though Mormon missionaries are active all over the world, they seem never really to have tried to proselytize the people of the canyon. When two young missionaries did once turn up at my friend's house, where I have been staying, about 1,300 feet above Salt Lake, they came off the mountains on foot, and she asked them if they were unaware that there is now a paved road up which they could have driven. The engaging simplicity in this story only reflects an outlook on life the Mormons seem somehow to have preserved, even with the adjustments they have made to mainstream America.

SO I FLEW BACK from the West, where snow is white and not regarded as an enemy, to this capital city in the East, where snow is black and the people were as palsied by it as if nuclear winter had struck. But this was no more dismaying than meeting again the Easterners' sniggers at the Mormons, masking a prejudice that can only recall the persecution that pursued them across the continent. A very successful Mormon businesswoman and a direct descendant of one of the founding families of Mormonism refused to grant me a more formal interview after I met her socially. She felt I was out to put down her church, and although she was mistaken, the fact is that the Mormons have every reason for still feeling misrepresented and persecuted. More generally, there is in the typical Eastern attitude toward the Mormons a deep-seated, unacknowledged prejudice against all religion as such—unless that religion is so drained of all authoritative moral and social precepts that a church or temple might as well be an ongoing block party of secular good feeling. It is impossible to come back now and not feel that the Democrats will once again blow it in the next presidential election if the Eastern influence in the party does not stop scoffing at the necessity that millions of ordinary Americans feel to ground their values in religious belief, teaching, and even authority. In all presidential elections for the past 20 years (except one in which the Democratic candidate was a born-again Southerner), the South, the West, and the Southwest have been thrown into alliance to elect a Republican president, precisely because of this kind of Eastern prejudice.

IN MY FIRST ENCOUNTER with the Mormons of Salt Lake City three years ago, I found myself one Fourth of July at my non-Mormon friend's house, where most of the guests were Mormons, the majority of them belonging to a single family of three generations that seemed as numerous as the tribes of Israel that sprang from all those endless "begats" in the Old Testament. At one point on the lawn in the strong Western sun, my friend looked up at one of them, a young man, fair-haired, clean-cut, clear-eyed, who had served his term as a missionary in England, and said, "You all look so healthy and happy." He answered simply, "We *are* all healthy and happy." It is the kind of remark that can make me sick, and pleading that the sun was too much for me, I fled to the sunless indoors to cultivate shady remembrances of decadence and corruption when I was his age. Many of the Mormons' certainties are uncongenial to me. I find it impossible to take seriously the revelations in the *Book of Mormon*; I find unacceptable the place ordained for women in both their church and the wider community; and it supports causes I oppose, including the lavish funding of the whole network of right-wing religious organizations. But that is quite different from a refusal to acknowledge that their staunchness in their faith and way of life upholds other values cherished by the vast majority of ordinary Americans, which they feel have been seriously threatened in recent years—not least the strength, stability, and attractive numerousness of the characteristic Mormon family.

AND IF THERE IS a reflex prejudice against religion in the East, there is also a supercilious attitude toward the West, which is regarded as a playground for Easterners, and otherwise an intellectual and cultural waste (a sniff of superiority that is of course also extended to the South and Southwest). What is unacknowledged is the energy and fabulous spaciousness of the West, which one feels in one's first bound to the great bowl of the Western sky. The feeling of freeing is not only physical. It is as if Westerners know they are still at the beginning, that the making of America has hardly even started. The East should be proud and inspirited by the fact that the energy it once had it has sent forth across the continent to people the land. And one thing that was taken across the country was the very religious impulse that first made landfall on Plymouth Rock. Even the characteristic entrepreneurial energy of the West harks back to the same energy that was for so long the mark of New England. The East seems today to have forgotten that the entrepreneurial energy went with the religious energy.

I AM PLEADING FOR no more tolerance for the Mormons than they extend to others (though in fact they extend quite a lot, and Salt Lake is quite a liberal city, and certainly unoppressive in its spirit). After the long history of persecution of the Mormons, it is time the East extended to them a more open, generous, and sympathetic interest. My friend invited the two missionaries who tramped up Emigration Canyon to return. They did so regularly for three months. I would like tapes of her long dialogues with them, and since she holds her own beliefs and opinions forcefully, I can believe that the eager apostles said goodnaturedly in the end that it might be better for the peace of their church if they failed to convert her. It is that good nature of exchange on both sides that is needed (not only with the Mormons), and since the Eastern influence is so powerful in the culture and media, it is for the East to open its mind first to a people who are, after all, thoroughgoing Americans.

H. F.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE ULTIMATE VISION: EYES FOR THE BACK OF YOUR HEAD.

To see some accidents coming, you'd have to be born with radar. But you're not, so GM is working to give you the next best thing. Radar for your car. The option to "see" all around you, all at once. It's called Obstacle Detection. Just one of the many safety features GM is developing for cars of the future.

Obstacle Detection will operate by sensors strategically placed all around your car which will sense and warn you of obstacles you're approaching, giving you a chance to avoid them.

At GM, we can't prevent all accidents from happening, but we want to help you steer clear of as many as we can.

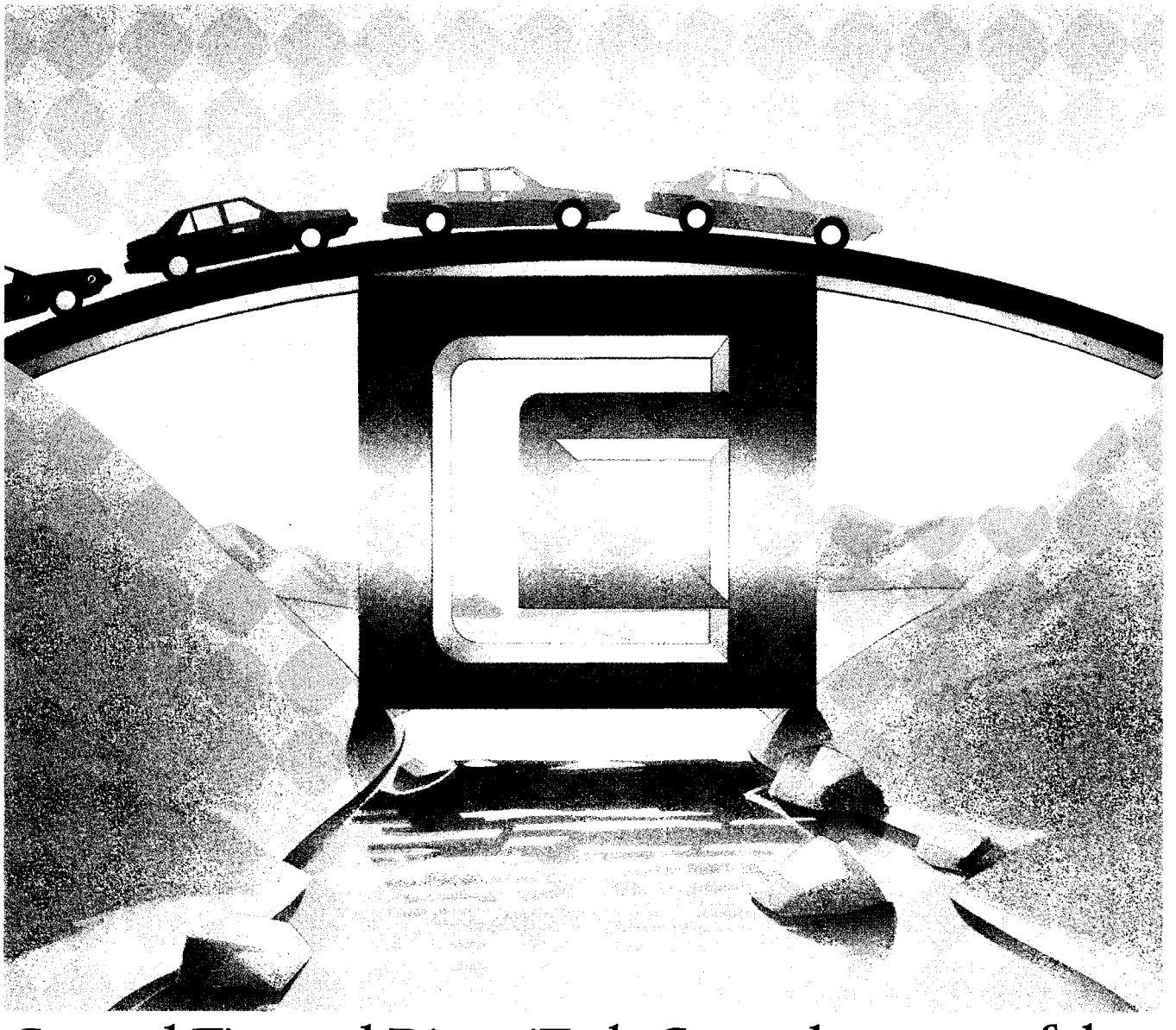
• THE GM ODYSSEY: SCIENCE NOT FICTION

GM

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Count on us for strong ideas.

New fiberglass-reinforced composites for auto bodies. Stronger adhesives for high-mileage tires. Improved vibration-isolation products for smoother rides. Some of the strongest ideas in transportation come from GenCorp. Look for more—just down the road.



General Tire and DiversiTech General are two of the aggressive businesses that put GenCorp in a strong position to serve the automotive market. The other GenCorp subsidiaries are Aerojet General and RKO General.

GENCORP
Exploring new directions

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED